

BRES note for all micro data users regarding size band analysis

In June 2014, ONS became aware of an issue concerning the quality of employment size band estimates based on the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES).

ONS is currently carrying out further investigations into this issue and will provide a further update when more information is available. Until this time, ONS recommend that VML users do not produce sizeband estimates using the BRES data.

All other (non-sizeband) BRES estimates are unaffected by this issue and users should continue to have confidence in using these estimates in their own analysis."

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There is still an issue with the data, although we are working with Methodology to resolve it. At the moment, due to the complexity of the changes that are required, it is unclear whether this will be resolved in time for the release of the provisional 2014 results in September. If this is not possible, then it is unlikely that we will produce revised microdata until the following September, although we would aim to provide users with more details on the issue before then.

So we need to continue with the warnings, but make it clear that all other estimates are still considered to be very good quality. I think the current note covers this, but if you want to make some amendments based on the information above then I'm happy to review these.

Many thanks,

James Scruton

We recently had a meeting with the Scottish Government and one of the things we discussed was the BRES urban/rural estimates for Scotland. Although we do not actually publish any urban/rural estimates there is both an urban/rural indicator and an urban/rural designation variable for every local unit on the BRES microdata I supply you with:

urind = 2001 Rural Urban Classification for small area geographies

ur = local unit rural/urban designation (derived from urind)

The Scottish Government do publish their own urban rural estimates, however the methodology used to generate such estimates is different to that used by BRES. The BRES urban/rural estimates are solely derived using urban rural indicators taken from the Postcode Address File (PAF). However, the Scottish Government use a number of different data sources (of which the PAF is just one) to generate theirs:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/About/Methodology/UrbanRuralClassification/Urban-Rural-Classification-2011-12>

This is of concern to the Scottish Government. I think it is therefore prudent that some form of footnote or the like is added to the BRES VML data to highlight this difference in methodology and the fact that any Scottish rural/rural analysis done via the VML will not match the rural/rural estimates published by the Scottish Government.

Regards,

Steve Taylor