

Sex and Gender in Data Working Group
Note of Meeting – 23 September 2019

Attendees
Roger Halliday (RH)
Jon Hunter (JH)
Anneli Lyon (AL)
Elaine Strange (ES)
Nasreen Mohammed (NM) (pp. Paul Matheson)
Simon Cameron (SC)
Sean Stronach (SeS)
Simon Stockwell (SS)
Poppy Wilson (PW) (Secretariat)
Eliza Swinn (ES) (via phone)
Melissa Randall (MR) (via phone)
Apologies
Matthew Maycock
Sarah Munro

Introductions
<p>RH welcomed attendees to the meeting, and invited introductions around the table.</p> <p>Members have experience of developing and running statistical collections in the fields of census, health, police, prisons, and presenting data on these issues and more broadly about people's socio-demographic characteristics</p> <p>Related programmes of work were noted, including the recently announced Non-Binary Working Group, and the ongoing Gender Recognition Act reform work.</p>
Terms of Reference
<p>Draft terms of reference were reviewed and agreed by members.</p>
Project Plan and Risk Register
<p>RH talked members through the project plan, noting key milestones and provisionally agreed timetable. RH will blog about each working group meeting, and in the interim, to keep public and stakeholders informed.</p> <p>RH gave an overview of the risk register and invited members to highlight any additional risks. It was agreed that there are long-standing issues around data disaggregation and presentation, and that this is a sensitive topic with strong stakeholder views.</p> <p>Members acknowledged that some stakeholders may be concerned by the working group and the content of any proposal it develops, and expectations will therefore need to be managed. RH noted that the focus of the working group is on how data is collected and disaggregated, not about how data is used.</p>

AL highlighted the importance of ensuring that all stakeholders are given an opportunity to have their views heard. RH agreed that it is important to avoid restricting engagement to a pre-defined list of stakeholders. The group agreed to undertake more thinking on how to do this.

Communications and Engagement Plan

NRS have already undertaken stakeholder mapping in this area as part of their Census 2021 question development work, and have done some parallel stakeholder engagement sessions. Working Group to consider this approach and speak to AL for more detail.

PW noted that RH has written to a number of relevant stakeholders inviting a conversation. In addition, there are plans for a small number of engagement events, the exact timing and format of which have yet to be determined. The working group noted that organisations have also been writing in with views, questions and issues.

Underlying Statistical Principles

RH presented a set of underlying statistical principles as a framework for the group to work within. These were discussed and agreed.

Sharing knowledge and next steps

All members of the group shared details of their experience in collecting and presenting data on sex and gender, and known related pieces of work.

RH thanked all for attending, and for their input to the meeting. He recapped a summary of the high-level points of discussion:

Data on sex and gender is needed for:

- Equalities monitoring and reporting;
- Decisions on binary sex issues – e.g. whether to place someone in male or female prison;
- Operational reasons, such as service provision beyond binary sex.

The working group needs to understand and gather information on:

- Equality Act definitions;
- Definitions of relevant terms;

This would then lead on to:

- Guidance on thinking about uses;
- Standard questions and guidance about how to ask for that information.

Next Meeting

10.00am, Thursday 31 October 2019

St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG

Actions

Members to send existing definitions to secretariat as part of exercise to gather 'what we need'.

Members to send any information on the broad needs for collecting data (above and beyond, equality reporting, operational reasons, and decisions on gender/sex) to secretariat.

Members to share anything pertinent with the Working Group.