

## Pilot One

Pilot One took place during February and March 2006 and involved 39 face-to-face interviewers. Ten were interviewers who had worked on previous Integrated Household Survey (IHS) trials, 25 were randomly selected interviewers and 4 were new interviewers who had recently been recruited and trained. An additional 6 telephone interviewers, all of which had previous experience on IHS trials, attempted cases reissued from field interviewers into the Telephone Unit (TU).

The main aims of the pilot were to: produce a measure of response, test the IHS design with new field interviewers, to test new training methodologies and to test a refined Blaise instrument and questionnaire.

Following feedback from Feasibility Trial Two, a number of improvements to the IHS design were trialled in Pilot One. These included:

- An updated questionnaire to improve interview flow, reduce repetition between the Core and topic modules, and improve the way concurrent interviewing is managed;

- Improved training methodologies, including greater use of e-based distance learning, involvement from field management in the training delivery, and more emphasis at the briefing on selling the survey and practical sessions;

- Compulsory interviewer shadowing for all interviewers prior to the briefing day;

All interviewers paired with a "buddy" from another field force to telephone for advice during the pilot;

Face-to-face interviewers worked on weekly batches of work, with the ability to extend work for all IHS interview combinations into a second week with prior permission from their Field Managers; and Greater engagement with field management (including specific Regional Manager and Field Manager briefings on the IHS), an improved field infrastructure and increased levels of interviewer support and monitoring, compared with the previous field trials.

The data indicate that the Opinions, Lifestyle and Education interview combinations had similar response rates to the Omnibus, General Household Survey Longitudinal (GSL) and Annual Population Survey (APS) respectively. The Work and Cost of Living interview combinations achieved response rates lower than the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Expenditure and Food Survey (EFS). However, Pilot One did not mirror the live survey in all aspects of design, preparation and operation, and certain factors are likely to have impacted on response rates. In addition, with the exception of the Work interview combination, the sample sizes from the pilot are insufficient to be able to statistically detect whether there are differences in response between the IHS and the component surveys. The new interviewers coped well with the IHS design, and achieved higher response rates in the pilot than the more experienced interviewers. Furthermore, the LFF interviewers gained higher response rates than the GFF interviewers. The suite of training

delivered to interviewers was an improvement from FT2, as was the questionnaire with improved flow and less repetition.

Interviewers' experiences and feedback on the pilot provided interesting and useful information. The results will feed into the next stage of the development process of the IHS, a second Pilot to be held early 2007. This Pilot will be of a similar size to Pilot One, and hopes to use the new Survey Case Management System (SCMS), enabling enhancements to field management and better data handling, more flexibility to move cases around between interviewers and between face to face and the telephone unit.

## Core design

The IHS Consultation Exercise response described customer and user support for a core module administered to the whole sample (covering all households and adult members) and topic modules administered to parts of the sample. The content of the core could be fixed for a set number of years, e.g. a 5-year period, and would provide classificatory variables essential for analysis. The criteria for inclusion in the core are set out in the paper.

There was also support for a small rotating core with questions included periodically - these questions would be administered to the whole sample and would be repeated every 2 to 5 years. It would be used for topics that were unlikely to change on an annual basis, such as carers or older people. The core, rotating core and topic modules

would be combined to create a number of different interview types.

After ONS has analysed the Pilot One study and completed the latest round of bilaterals, a paper will be produced which sets out the recommended modular design and content options for the IHS core and rotating core modules, together with options for how part sample topics might be organised into interview types and sample size requirements. Further work is also planned to look at the feasibility of further integration and standardisation of certain topics across the IHS where at present questionnaire content and outputs may differ across the separate component surveys. The first two areas to be looked at will be education and income. Liaison with key stakeholders will be an essential part of this work.

Essential that we keep in liaison with Census development teams, ONS Harmonised working Groups (recently re-established) and working closely with the component survey teams.

Pilot Two

in planning process - scheduled for Feb/Mar 07

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