2011 Census aggregate data challenges

The population census is a vital resource for social scientific research and policy development, providing a snapshot of demographic and social life in the UK that helps inform government policy at local and central level.

We provide access to 1971 to 2011 Census outputs through the UK Data Service Census Support.

What is census aggregate data?
Aggregate data provide counts, usually of individuals or households with particular characteristics for an area. An example might be the number of males, aged 20-24, who are divorced and live in Devon.

census.ukdataservice.ac.uk

2011 Census challenges
We’re delivering 2011 census aggregate data through our flexible topics based interface InFuse. Some of the challenges we faced:

• UK censuses are conducted by 3 different agencies:
  - Office for National Statistics (England and Wales)
  - National Records of Scotland (NRS) (Scotland)
  - Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
• inconsistency of definitions, within and across censuses
• different questions/wording between censuses
• issues with age bandings. England and Wales will use a reduced number of age bandings. This will enhance consistency between England and Wales tables. However, Northern Ireland will continue with the full range of age bands. Meaning that comparability between the UK countries will be compromised
• complicated geographic hierarchies
• issues with wards, different types of wards were created with potentially different boundaries – but using identical codes
• different thresholds used to generate the small area statistics

Access InFuse
Access is restricted to staff and students from UK higher/further education institutions
infuse.mimas.ac.uk

UK Data Service Census Support
We provide access to, and user support for, data from the last five UK population censuses (1971-2011)

We hold a range of different types of census data, such as:
• census aggregate data
• census flow data
• census microdata
• census boundary data

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