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EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON QUALITY IN OFFICIAL STATISTICS
2024 ESTORIL - PORTUGAL

Communicating ethnicity data quality

Richard Laux and Darren Stillwell
UK Cabinet Office Equality Hub

Thursday 6 June

Session 19

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Overview

- The Cabinet Office Equality Hub
- Improving ethnicity data quality
- 3 methods of communicating ethnicity data quality:
  - Standards for Ethnicity Data
  - Methods and Quality reports
  - Blog posts
- Rationale
- Details
- 3 important points

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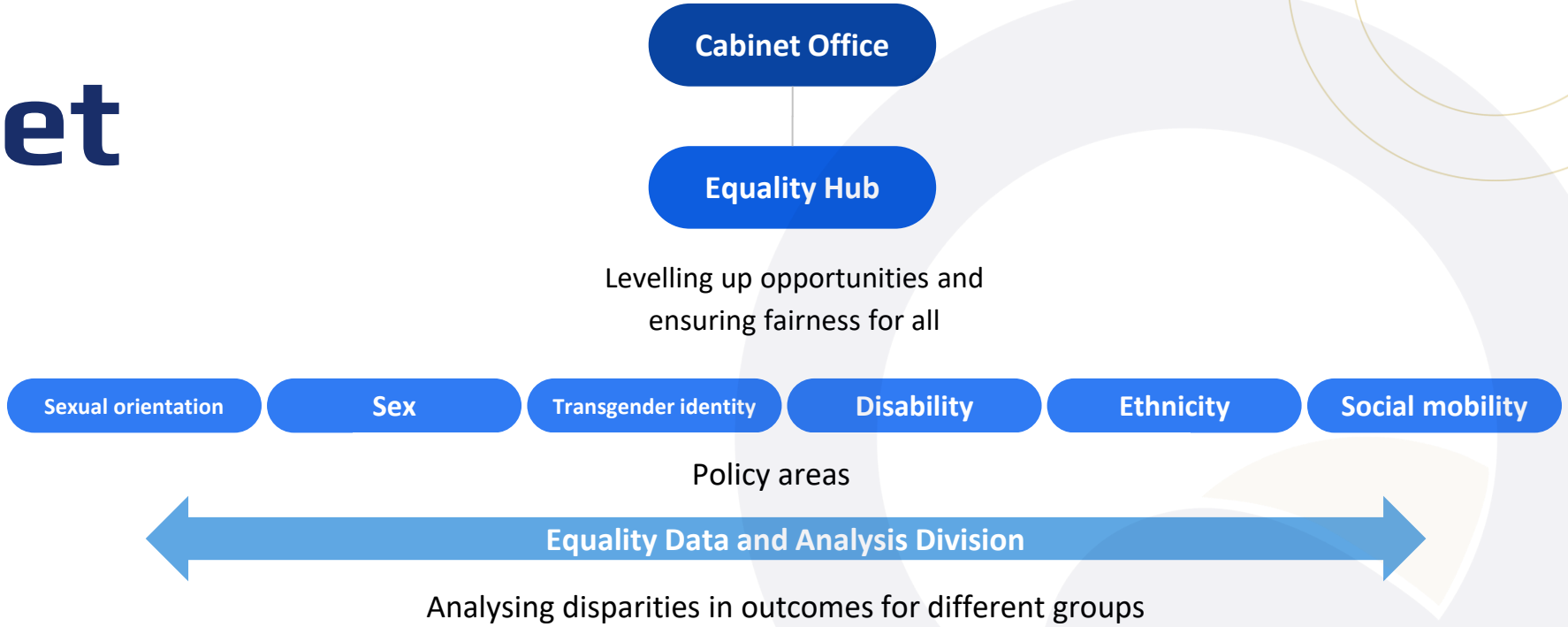
The Cabinet Office Equality Hub



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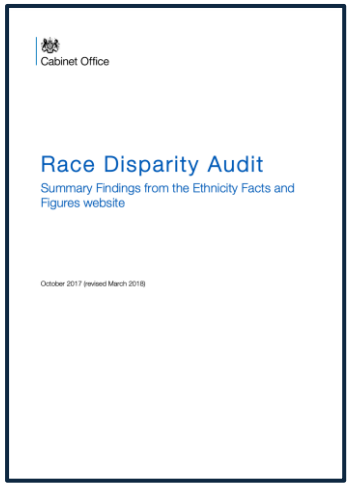
Improving ethnicity data quality


Cabinet Office

Race Disparity Audit

Summary Findings from the Ethnicity Facts and Figures website

October 2017 (revised March 2018)

Research and analysis

Final report on progress to address COVID-19 health inequalities

Published 3 December 2021

Contents

Introduction

Overview and executive summary

1. Measures to address COVID-19 disparities
2. Data and evidence of disparities
3. Data quality
4. Stakeholder engagement and insights
5. Communications

Introduction

Following publication of the Public Health England (PHE) report COVID-19: review of disparities in risks and outcomes in June 2020, the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care asked the Minister for Equalities, Kemi Badenoch MP, with support from the Cabinet Office Race Disparity Unit (RDU), to lead cross-government work to address the report's findings.

Under the terms of reference for this work, which are set out in Appendix A, the Minister for Equalities was tasked with submitting quarterly progress reports to the Prime Minister. This is the fourth and final progress report, following those published on 22 October, 26 February and 25 May.

GOV.UK

Ethnicity facts and figures

Ethnicity facts and figures

Government data about the UK's different ethnic groups.

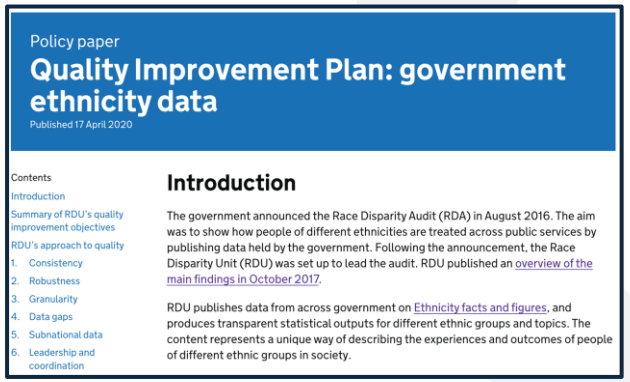
82% of people in England and Wales are white, and 18% belong to a black, Asian, mixed or other ethnic group (2021 Census data).

Find information about the experiences and outcomes of people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds.

Search

HM Government

Inclusive Britain


Policy paper

Quality Improvement Plan: government ethnicity data

Published 17 April 2020

Contents

Introduction

Summary of RDU's quality improvement objectives

RDU's approach to quality

1. Consistency
2. Robustness
3. Granularity
4. Data gaps
5. Subnational data
6. Leadership and coordination

Introduction

The government announced the Race Disparity Audit (RDA) in August 2016. The aim was to show how people of different ethnicities are treated across public services by publishing data held by the government. Following the announcement, the Race Disparity Unit (RDU) was set up to lead the audit. RDU published an overview of the main findings in October 2017.

RDU publishes data from across government on Ethnicity facts and figures, and produces transparent statistical outputs for different ethnic groups and topics. The content represents a unique way of describing the experiences and outcomes of people of different ethnic groups in society.

Office for National Statistics

Inclusive data taskforce

Implementation Plan

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3 ways of communicating ethnicity data quality

- Standards for Ethnicity Data
- Methods and Quality reports (MQRs)
- Blog posts

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Rationale

- Ethnicity data - high profile and sensitive
- Vital our work is trusted
- Emphasise our trustworthiness:
  - User engagement
  - Meet user needs
  - Adding value
  - Sharing expertise

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Trust

- Demonstrate:
  - Statistical leadership
  - Thought leadership
- Gives us authority
- Positive feedback
- Better outcomes

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Standards for Ethnicity Data

- Describe good practice in ethnicity data:
  - collection
  - analysis
  - reporting
- Government departments/public organisations
- Improve data quality

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Standards for Ethnicity Data

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Standards for Ethnicity Data

- Content:
  - harmonisation
  - Not using BAME
  - Increasing representation
  - Self-reporting
  - Controlling for other factors
  - Reporting on missing ethnicity

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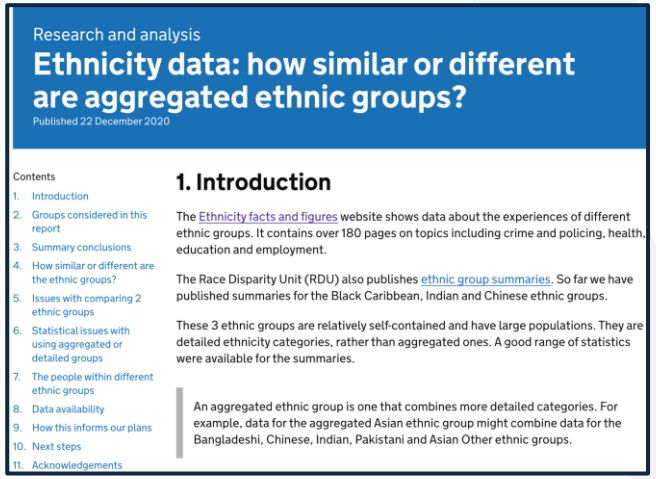
MQRs

- How to interpret and use data
- What we are doing to improve ethnicity data
- Data quality issues for specific ethnic groups



Research and analysis

Ethnicity data: how similar or different are aggregated ethnic groups?

Published 22 December 2020

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Groups considered in this report
3. Summary conclusions
4. How similar or different are the ethnic groups?
5. Issues with comparing 2 ethnic groups
6. Statistical issues with using aggregated or detailed groups
7. The people within different ethnic groups
8. Data availability
9. How this informs our plans
10. Next steps
11. Acknowledgements

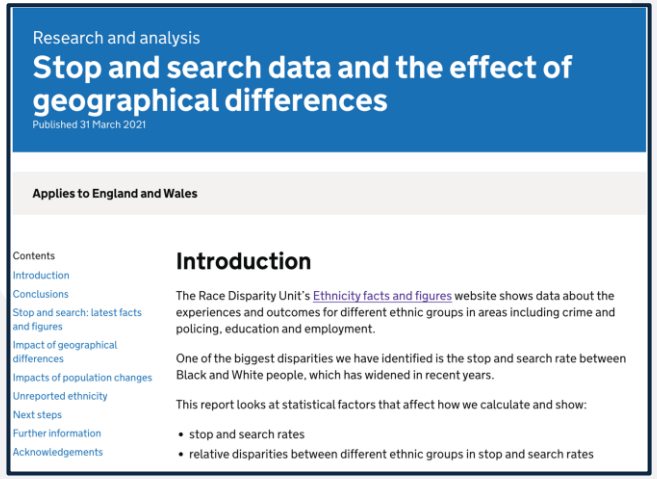
1. Introduction

The Ethnicity facts and figures website shows data about the experiences of different ethnic groups. It contains over 180 pages on topics including crime and policing, health, education and employment.

The Race Disparity Unit (RDU) also publishes ethnic group summaries. So far we have published summaries for the Black Caribbean, Indian and Chinese ethnic groups.

These 3 ethnic groups are relatively self-contained and have large populations. They are detailed ethnicity categories, rather than aggregated ones. A good range of statistics were available for the summaries.

> An aggregated ethnic group is one that combines more detailed categories. For example, data for the aggregated Asian ethnic group might combine data for the Bangladeshi, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani and Asian Other ethnic groups.



Research and analysis

Stop and search data and the effect of geographical differences

Published 31 March 2021

Applies to England and Wales

Contents

- Introduction
- Conclusions
- Stop and search: latest facts and figures
- Impact of geographical differences
- Impacts of population changes
- Unreported ethnicity
- Next steps
- Further information
- Acknowledgements

Introduction

The Race Disparity Unit's Ethnicity facts and figures website shows data about the experiences and outcomes for different ethnic groups in areas including crime and policing, education and employment.

One of the biggest disparities we have identified is the stop and search rate between Black and White people, which has widened in recent years.

This report looks at statistical factors that affect how we calculate and show:

- stop and search rates
- relative disparities between different ethnic groups in stop and search rates

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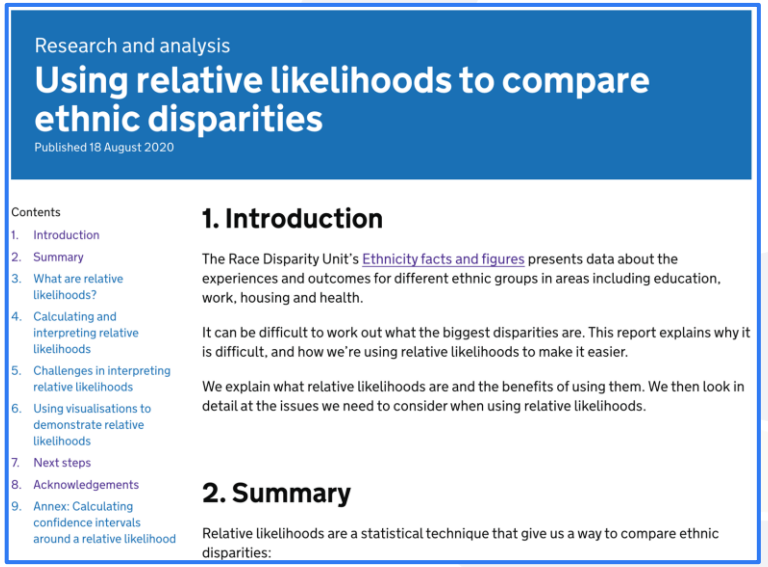
MQRs

- Summarise issues
- Provide recommendations
- Considered, definitive pieces



Research and analysis

Using relative likelihoods to compare ethnic disparities

Published 18 August 2020

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Summary
3. What are relative likelihoods?
4. Calculating and interpreting relative likelihoods
5. Challenges in interpreting relative likelihoods
6. Using visualisations to demonstrate relative likelihoods
7. Next steps
8. Acknowledgements
9. Annex: Calculating confidence intervals around a relative likelihood

1. Introduction

The Race Disparity Unit's Ethnicity facts and figures presents data about the experiences and outcomes for different ethnic groups in areas including education, work, housing and health.

It can be difficult to work out what the biggest disparities are. This report explains why it is difficult, and how we're using relative likelihoods to make it easier.

We explain what relative likelihoods are and the benefits of using them. We then look in detail at the issues we need to consider when using relative likelihoods.

2. Summary

Relative likelihoods are a statistical technique that give us a way to compare ethnic disparities:

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Blog posts

- Impress on users importance of different data quality aspects
- Harmonisation especially, but also…
- International differences
- Using someone's name to assign ethnicity

Attributing ethnicity using someone's name

By Darren Stillwell
30 May 2022

In a recent methods and quality report, the Race Disparity Unit (RDU) talked about how someone's name could be used to assign their ethnicity. This blog post further considers the strengths and weaknesses of this approach.

Research shows that using someone's name to assign their ethnicity can help fill gaps when ethnicity data is not readily available. People's names are usually collected in surveys and administrative processes. Easily-accessed, large data sources – such as the electoral register – make names and geographic information readily available.

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Blog posts

- Quick, dynamic
- Demonstrate progress in quality improvements
- Narrative

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3 key points

1. **Outputs package up EDAD's wider thinking on data quality issues**
2. **EDAD demonstrates leadership and expertise through them**
3. **Increase trustworthiness**

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Thank you!

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