

Independence for National Statistics



The Government confirmed in November plans to make the Office for National Statistics (ONS) independent. Following a full public consultation, the [Statistics and Registration Service Bill](#) was introduced in the Commons on 21 November 2006 and published on 22 November 2006.

The Bill will create a new independent Board, outside of Ministerial control, which will be constituted by a majority

of external, non-executive, members. The Board will have a statutory responsibility to promote and safeguard the quality and comprehensiveness of official statistics. The Board's responsibilities will extend across the UK, covering England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Last month, Hansard published a [debate on the second reading of the Statis-](#)

[tics and Registration Service Bill](#).

ONS will also be placing two statisticians in each region from April 2007, to help implement the recommendations of the 2004 Allsopp Review of regional economic statistics. In the South East, the plan is to co-locate the ONS statisticians with SEE-IN.



Regional Monitoring Systems Scoping Study



Roger Tym and Partners have recently completed a [Monitoring Systems Scoping Study](#).

The work was commissioned by the South East England Regional Assembly to address the difficulties involved in collecting data for their Regional Monitoring Report. It investigated the issues facing the two annual surveys sent out to local authorities on housing and commercial uses respectively. A number of monitoring officers were consulted from all types of authorities across the South East region.

The consultation revealed a number of problems with the current surveys, ranging from the lack of monitoring resources in local authorities to the complicated nature of definitions used by the Assembly.

Based on the consultation, a variety of options for improvement were suggested. At the small scale these include improved support for local authorities, whilst at the large scale, a geographically referenced database was

suggested as a means of holding site level data from each authority in the region.

It was also proposed that a database could be developed for use by local authorities in populating the two annual surveys. The aggregated data as presented in the Regional Monitoring Report would also be made publicly available. The Regional Assembly's Monitoring Advisory Group is liaising with SEE-IN over potential hosting of this database on the SEE-IN website.



SEE-iN website

One of the key delivery methods used by SEE-iN is its website. Through this, we try and share data, intelligence, policy and best practice with the wider community. However, we have found that our current solution has not been meeting our needs and as such changes are coming.

We have started work with a web design company in the region to ensure that the website is meeting the needs of its stakeholders and remains stable enough to develop as these needs change. Please bear with us over the coming months as we try to ensure a smooth transition to the new platform. In the meantime, content will still be added to the current site, but if there is anything in particular you require, drop us an email at info@see-in.co.uk.



Interactive data tool

There are more exciting changes coming to your computer screen soon. SEE-iN has started work with Experian and Active on the development of an online data tool. Once launched, users will be able to query a wide range of regional datasets, covering everything from the Census to GVA and landscape designations, all from one tool.

The development of the data tool is a drive away from simply signposting users to the raw data online. Instead, users will be able to search for data, either by data set or geography, and gain instant access to the data in a meaningful form. With the option of viewing the data in a map, table or chart, along with the ability to download it, we hope users will find this a valuable resource in using evidence to inform their work.

The data tool is expected to go live in late Spring. Before then though, we are engaging with a range of stakeholders to ensure the tool not only meets the needs of the region, but also encompasses the data sets that are key to our work.



Rural evidence base

As alluded to in the last newsletter, SEE-iN is currently working on supporting the region's rural policy makers. In the Spring, we will publish a Rural Evidence Base for the South East, filling a current gap in good quality regional rural data. Recent months have seen the release of some important documents for the rural South East – the [Regional Rural Delivery Framework](#) and the [Regional Implementation Plan for the Rural Development Programme for England](#). It is important that the region is equipped to monitor progress against the actions and priorities in these documents and the Evidence Base will aid in this.

Southeast Cultural Observatory update

The Southeast Cultural Observatory (SECO) continues to develop new themes to help people trying to maximise the impact of culture in the South East. New pages include guides to the region's:

- [Sport and physical activity in the region](#)
- [Arts](#)
- [Museums, libraries and archives](#)

As with the local government agenda, SECO's [local government section](#) is developing all the time. It now includes a "[Strategies Anonymous](#)" page to save you time and temper in drawing up cultural and related strategies.

With the social and political climate ripe for cultural social enterprise to thrive, SECO is developing [social enterprise pages](#), including an array of [resources](#) to get you started.

SECO will shortly be publishing a fortnightly e-bulletin which aims to keep you abreast of cultural news, research, new publications and events. If you'd like to subscribe, please email info@seco.org.uk, or alternatively visit www.seco.org.uk and click the Sign Up link.



Sexual health reports published

The South East Public Health Observatory (SEPHO) and the Association of Public Health Observatories have recently published regional and national sexual health reports respectively.

The main purpose of the SEPHO report – '[Choosing Health in the South East: Sexual Health](#)' is to present an overview of sexual health across the South East region; it also highlights changing attitudes towards sex and the possible consequences of poor sexual health. The APHO report – '[Indications of Public Health in the English Regions 6: Sexual Health](#)' puts sexual health in the South East in context when compared to other regions and outlines key national targets and recommendations. Both reports are intended to be useful to all those concerned with sexual health at regional and local level, in local government and the NHS.

The regional report is the latest addition to the [Choosing Health series of reports](#), which draw upon data on the South East to focus on topics identified by the 2004 Choosing Health White Paper published by the Department of Health.

The Observatory has also just published a new Choosing Health report on alcohol. The report – '[Choosing Health in the South East: Alcohol](#)' explores trends and patterns in alcohol consumption across the region and sets out ways of tackling the problem.





New on SEE-iN

- + Small and Medium Enterprise Statistics for the Regions 2005 (SBS)
- + Regional, Sub-Regional and Local Gross Value Added (ONS)
- + Housing Statistics 2006 (DCLG)
- + Statutory Homelessness: 3rd Quarter 2006, England (DCLG)
- + Inter-Regional Migration Movements within the UK—year to March 2006 (ONS)
- + Regional Trade Statistics, 3rd Quarter (HMRC)
- + Regional Economic Strategy 2006—2016: The Evidence Base (SEEDA)
- + Mental Health and Well-Being in the South East (South East Public Health Group)
- + Towards a Methodology for the Apportionment of London's Waste (South East England Regional Assembly)
- + Cancer Inequalities in the South East (Oxford Cancer Intelligence Unit)
- + Carbon Dioxide Emissions at Local Authority and Regional Level (Defra)

Coming Soon

Research and data

February 2007

Regional and Local Electricity Consumption: 2005 (DTI)

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2006 (ONS)

A8 migrant workers in rural areas—Briefing Paper (CRC)

Events 2007

8 Feb: 7th South East Public Health Conference — 2007 (London)

www.sepho.org.uk

1 Mar: The 2011 Census: Updated view on content for England

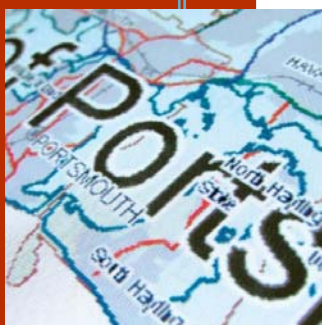
and Wales (London)

www.statistics.gov.uk

2-5 April: Regional Studies Association—'Regions in Focus?' (Lisbon, Portugal)

www.regional-studies-assoc.ac.uk

A member of the Association of Regional Observatories



About SEE-iN

The South East England Intelligence Network is a partnership funded organisation and is the Regional Observatory for the South East.

We aim to encourage and facilitate the development of evidence based policy work, through the coordination of data and intelligence.

www.see-in.co.uk

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