

15. Understanding the impact of the pandemic on population and migration

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The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic presents a significant challenge to the UK, and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is working to ensure that we have the vital information needed to respond to the impact of this pandemic on our economy and society. In line with the UK Statistics Authority strategy *Statistics for the Public Good*, we are putting administrative data at the core of our statistical system to deliver the best quality Census 2021 outputs and to transform our population, migration and social statistics.

The importance of reflecting how the pandemic has impacted population and migration and the current challenges associated with data to measure this have highlighted the following:

- The need to understand the population ahead of official estimates
- The need for contemporary evidence on migration, following the suspension of the International Passenger Survey (IPS) in March 2020
- The impact of these on labour market methods and sources
- The need to provide support to Census 2021, particularly in estimating where mobile population groups (e.g. students) are likely to be living
- The impact of the pandemic on how our population is living and the need for timely small-area statistics to support decision-making.

This presentation will outline our plans to address these challenges, share any early insights from our research and discuss further areas for analysis.