

SASPAC Newsletter

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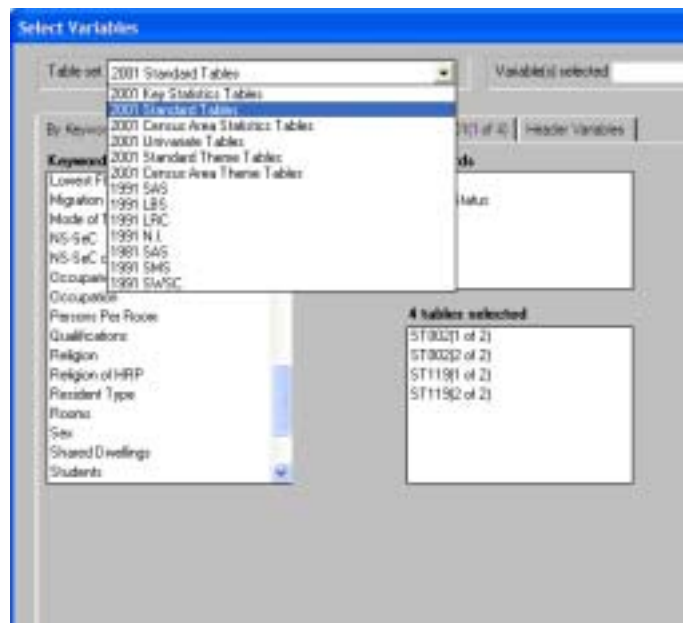
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SASPAC provides access to all currently available 2001 Census data.

SASPAC version 7 is now available to all users of SASPAC. This new version allows on-screen searching of all the 2001 datasets. Along with this release, users in England, Wales, and Scotland received all data that the Census Offices had released at that time, in the form of files that are instantly accessible by SASPAC.

Searching facilities for each of the 2001 datasets have been added as shown in this screen image. The user first selects the required dataset from a drop-down listing – note that the 1991 and 1981 datasets are still available for searching – and then uses the associated keywords or text-searching facilities to locate the appropriate table.

In addition to these searching facilities, metadata files are also supplied to provide the text necessary to define the Census Offices table structures. As new tables (especially the Origin/Destination datasets) become available, additional search facilities and files will be made available to all users.



SASPAC Web site update (www.saspac.org)

We are currently updating the SASPAC Web site with the addition of pages relating to the 2001 Census data and the operation of SASPAC. We will be adding a series of User Guidance Notes that will explain to users the elements of various SASPAC operations. The intention is that users of SASPAC will make use of the Web site as a resource to supplement the training that can be provided. We are also starting to make data downloadable from the site. Bookmark the site now, so that you can visit it regularly.

Disclosure Control, Small Cell Adjustments, and resultant data issues

A frequent request to the SASPAC Help Desk relates to discrepancies between tables that have arisen through the Small Cell Adjustment Method applied by ONS. By this method, a small count appearing in a table cell is adjusted – information on what constitutes a small cell count cannot be provided as this may compromise confidentiality protection. Totals and subtotals in tables are calculated as the sum of the adjusted data so that all tables are internally additive; within tables, totals and subtotals are the sum of the adjusted constituent counts. Because of this, data may not be consistent across datasets, or even across tables within a dataset.

Where a choice of source of data is available, the user should make use of the source where, within a table, the data required is the sum of the least number of individual cells.

As an example of this, compare the number of females aged 85 and over for each ward in England as obtained from Tables ST001 and ST002. If the first of these tables is used, the variable required is created as the sum of four counts in the table, while in the second, the variable is created as the sum of two counts. However, these counts are themselves the sums of other counts – in the first case 32 counts, and in the second case 12 counts. When the results are examined, the range of the differences between the two values is minus 18 to plus 20. The largest difference is found in Pallister ward in Middlesbrough where the value obtained from table ST001 is 45 and that obtained from Table ST002 is 25. ***It is clear that great care must be taken when interpreting the results obtained where the data is derived from populations that are sparse.***

2001 Census datasets

The Census Offices have released several datasets over the last few months and news of the availability of some of these has been posted on the SASPC Web site. The most recent arrivals have been the Key Statistics for Parishes and Postcode Sectors in England and Wales. These are now available on request from the SASPAC Helpdesk.

We currently plan to have a consolidated release of all datasets where new (or corrected) tables have been produced towards the end of May. This will include, among others, all the Standard Tables and Standard Theme Tables supplied by ONS in February, and which have been combined with the previously issued tables to create a full dataset of existing tables.

Specially Commissioned Tables

ONS are now making available a number of specially commissioned tables from the 2001 Census as well as offering a table commissioning service. The tabulations available so far have been commissioned by a range of organisations, and are being made freely available on request once they have been supplied to the people who originally commissioned them. ONS have put a list of the tables available on their website, and intend to update it as further tables are released. *Please note the licensing arrangements for commissioned tables are not the same as for Standard Tables – users will need a distribution licence to pass them on.*

The tables cover a range of topics, for example the most detailed religion categories that people wrote in on their Census form, and have a range of population bases, such as all Spanish people, so users should be very careful to ensure that they know what they are getting. With the first phase of tables the supporting information is very sparse, so it may not be obvious what the table contains.

The GLA has obtained copies of all the tables that are available so far. Around 20 tables that are at ward level and above, and which add something to the Census data already published, have been converted into SASPAC system files with related framework files. This makes the use of them much easier. It is intended that these will be downloadable from the SASPAC website in the near future. Meanwhile, if users are interested in having early release copies of them, please contact Alan Lewis at the SASPAC Helpdesk. It is intended that as more tables become available, they will be converted into SASPAC System Files, and the necessary ancillary files will also be made available. Some of these tables will be available at lower level geographies, and will add greatly to the wealth of information already available from the Census.

New SASPAC Support Staff

Many users of SASPAC will already have been in contact with Alan Lewis, the additional member of staff dedicated to the support of SASPAC and its users. Alan has joined us from Southend Borough Council, and has already familiarised himself with the operation and requirements of SASPAC. He is also responsible for the enhancements and improvements that the SASPAC website has undergone in the last few months.



Mapshore

Pebbleshore, who contribute Mapshore to SASPAC, also make available Scamp-4 - an educational CD-ROM pack relating to 2001 Census data.

Users - mainly schools and colleges - receive a broad range of 2001 census data for whichever government regions they ask for (in .CSV format for the Mapshore included), which also comes with ward and Output Area boundaries and background road atlas style mapping to aid area location. The price is just £60+VAT including network licence. More details are to be found on www.pebbleshore.co.uk or Pebbleshore would be happy to provide information to be passed on to local schools. SASPAC users who find themselves asked to provide what becomes a Census data service to schools, voluntary organisations, etc might find it useful to suggest Scamp-4 as an alternative source!

Pebbleshore may be contacted at - Lewes Enterprise Centre 112 Malling Street Lewes Sussex BN7 2RJ
Tel: 01273 483890 Fax: 01273 479645 E-mail: Pebbleshore@btinternet.com and is also always happy to receive queries and support calls re Mapshore or mapping data, including boundary files, which users may not already hold.

To help us achieve our aim of producing at least two issues of this Newsletter each year, we are looking for some input from users on:

- any other enhancements you would like to see;
- tips for users of SASPAC;
- letters to the Editor;
- any other matters relating to the Census or other local area statistics.

If you have anything that you would wish to see published in the Newsletter, please let Hywel Davies have it as soon as possible - preferably as an e-mail attachment.

SASPAC is software specifically written for the analysis and interrogation of datasets derived from the Census of Population. The development is managed by the Greater London Authority on behalf of the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) (formerly Local Government Management Board). It is supported by its developers, CitiLabs (formerly MVA) and Northern Software Technology Limited. Mapshore - the mapping element of SASPAC - is developed and supported by Pebbleshore. Strategic support for the development and advancement of the SASPAC initiative is provided by Katalysis Ltd.

The development of the software is overseen by the SASPAC Advisory Panel. The members of this Panel are: Ray Brewer (Essex County Council); Malcolm Brown (Cornwall County Council); Paul Graveling (Gateshead and South Tyneside Health); Sherman Griffith (Joint Data Team); Justin Hayes (Manchester Computing Centre); Karen Hodder (Oxford Health); Eileen Howes (GLA); Owen Jenkins (Cardiff Research Centre); Allan Lambie (South Lanarkshire Council); Rob Lewis (GLA); Ian Robertson (IDeA); Ian Robertson (Leicester City Council); Peter Shilson (Leeds City Council).

Further information on SASPAC and the SASPAC Support Scheme is available from Hywel Davies, SASPAC Project Officer at the Greater London Authority, 5th Floor, City Hall, The Queen's Walk, LONDON, SE1 1AA.

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