

Subject BC Stats Population numbers
From Warren Munroe <wmpopulationanalysis@Shaw.ca>
Date Thursday, May 17, 2012 3:57 pm
To fe-demography@a.statcan.gc.ca

Hello Demography Division,

Could you please help us understand an issue regarding the different methods used by BC Stats and those used by Statistics Canada to estimate population to the sub-provincial level.

We have been told by the BC Ministry of Labour, Citizens' Services and Open Government that ...

"In a 2005 feasibility study prepared by Statistics Canada (STC) for Finance Canada, the agency concluded that:

*...population estimates produced by three provincial/territorial statistical agencies (Quebec, British Columbia, Northwest Territories) were all found to be of better quality when compared with those based on any of the three STC methods."*¹

However, Statistics Canada's Demography Division was not aware that BC Stats was using the change in telephone landline hookups as an indicator of population change to the municipal level in BC.²

We have also been told by the Executive Director of BC Stats in a revision of the methods published in 2011, that the use of telephone landline hookups as an indicator of population change to the municipal level in BC was "extensively analyzed".³

There are many other interesting methods for which I can provide insight as I was the Population Analyst for BC Stats when the 2005 feasibility study came out.

Indeed, I was the BC government Population Analyst who reviewed Statistics Canada's proposed methods for doing population estimates to the municipal level to have consistency across Canada and I found most definitely Statistics Canada's methods provided more reliable results.

Could we (people who use population numbers) please see the feasibility study and the write-up describing the testing of the population estimates produced by BC Stats and the comparison with the three STC methods?

Was Statistics Canada aware that the many changes to BC Stats population estimation methods between 1998 and 2011 were not published?

Was Statistics Canada aware in 2002 BC Stats began splitting BC municipalities into two groups running two separate regression models, giving one group compound growth?

Is Statistics Canada's Demography Division satisfied with BC Stats' underlying methodology?

Endnotes

1. <http://www.wminfomatics.com/WMAalytics/Articles/120127/PopEstWhat.html>
2. *ibid.*
3. Generalized Estimation System, 2011, BC Stats. Page 8. Also see the article regarding verification at <http://www.wminfomatics.com/WMAalytics/Articles/110922/BCSVerify1ii.html>