THE CHCC Project: Developing the Collection of Historical and Contemporary Census Data and Related Materials into a Major Learning and Teaching Resource

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ABSTRACT

The UK academic community has access to a Collection of Historical and Contemporary Census Data and related resources (CHCC), which are available in digital format. Although individual datasets have been used extensively in research they have been significantly under-used in teaching and learning. To address this, the CHCC Project has been funded by JISC, under its *Developing the DNER for Learning and Teaching* initiative. The project involves six partners from four UK Universities and runs from October 2000 until September 2003.

The primary aim of the project is to develop the CHCC into a major learning and teaching resource. The key objectives are to: promote increased and more effective use of network based data services for problem-based learning and student project work across a broad range of teaching programmes; develop an integrated web-based learning and teaching system that links together data extraction and visualisation/exploration tools with comprehensive learning and teaching resources; significantly increase the Census user base by increasing use of the CHCC in learning and teaching; build new user communities by promoting increased awareness of the CHCC and its learning and teaching potential; improve the productivity of teachers by significantly reducing the overheads required to incorporate Census data related resources into learning and teaching programmes; improve access to key primary data related resources; and minimise delays in getting the key 2001 Census outputs used in learning and teaching. The outputs from this project will be: a range of learning and teaching resources for teachers and learners (tutorials, exercises, exemplar-based studies); a portal to facilitate resource discovery of Census data and associated learning and teaching resources; improved web-based interfaces for data extraction/visualisation suitable for student use; and enhancement of the CHCC through adding and linking other information.

In this workshop we describe the CHCC project and the outputs to the academic community. We focus on the learning and teaching materials that are being developed to support wider use of the historical (nineteenth century) and contemporary (1971 – present) Census datasets.

The learning materials ('units') covering the whole spectrum of census topics are being developed both by the project team, and commissioned authors who have used Census data in their teaching. The units encourage a 'pick and mix' approach, enabling lecturers to choose a selection for online or classroom based teaching. Lecturers may choose from a portion of a single unit to several units built into a module. Such flexibility was a key requirement in response to user consultation, which forms a vital element of the project. An important feature is the potential for teachers and lecturers, subject to necessary acknowledgments, to customise units locally.

The workshop comprises a series of presentations, and builds on the success of previous workshops run by the project team. Following an overview of the project and user consultation to date, team members will describe materials that are available for piloting, and the approach to the development of these resources in response to user consultation. A session on feedback and discussion will follow these presentations. The availability of a small PC lab will assist anyone wishing to work through and evaluate the materials. Online feedback forms for these materials will further assist in the collation of user feedback.

Keywords

Census data, learning and teaching, DNER, network based data services