

The background of the cover features large, stylized numbers from 1 to 10. The numbers are rendered in various colors: 1 (light blue), 2 (pink), 3 (yellow), 4 (light red), 5 (light green), 6 (light blue), 7 (light red), 8 (light red), 9 (light green), 10 (light yellow). The numbers are arranged in a way that they appear to be overlapping and floating in the space.

NEEDING NUMBERS

**A Review of Research Data
on the Black and Minority
Ethnic Population in the
South West Region of
England**

***Summary of Final
Report (October 2006)***

*by Anita Naoko Pilgrim
for Black South West Network*

Review of Research Data on the Black and Minority Ethnic
Population in the South West Region of England

Summary Final Report October 2006

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1. INTRODUCTION

The main finding of the Final Report commissioned by Black South West Network into data on black and minority ethnic populations in the South West was that provision of such data is patchy at best, often out-dated and even where collected, may be inaccessible. It is difficult even to establish gaps in the data available, as there is no central holding where all studies on this subject in the region can be accessed.

Given that there are few studies or data-sets available on black and minority ethnic populations in the South West and that many of the reports which do exist are freely available on the internet, it will not be difficult to establish such a central holding. A working group set up by Black South West Network since the publication of this report, with partners including the South West Observatory, has the aim of improving data provision for black and minority ethnic populations in the region (IDP BME working group), and will take on this task as part of their remit.

In June 2000, Cabinet Office published their report, *Minority Ethnic Issues in Social Exclusion and Neighbourhood Renewal*. Here, it was noted:

There is a significant lack of information about minority ethnic groups in society, and about the impact of policies and programmes on them. But the available data demonstrates that, while there is much variation within and between different ethnic groups, overall, people from minority ethnic communities are more likely than others to live in deprived areas and in unpopular and overcrowded housing. They are more likely to be poor and to be unemployed, regardless of their age, sex, qualifications and place of residence. As a group they are as well qualified as white people, but some black and Asian groups do not do as well at school as others, and African-Caribbean pupils are disproportionately excluded from school. Pakistani, Bangladeshi and African-Caribbean people are more likely to report suffering ill-health than white people. And racial harassment and racist crime are widespread and under-reported, and not always treated as seriously as they should be.

Cabinet Office, 2000, p.7.

6 years on, the review of research data in the South West commissioned by Black South West Network found the picture for the black and minority ethnic population of the South West region unchanged. This finding was confirmed by a recent Neighbourhood Renewal report *A guide to ethnic monitoring data sources: monitoring floor and local targets in health*, in which datasets relating to health across Britain as a whole are shown to be particularly poor at including ethnic monitoring. (Bristol Local Strategic Partnership are cited in this report as an example of good practice in finding other means of establishing the health status of different ethnic groups.)

A Cabinet Office report comments:

Minority ethnic communities experience a double disadvantage. They are disproportionately concentrated in deprived areas and experience all the problems that affect other people in these areas. But people from minority ethnic communities also suffer the consequences of racial discrimination; services that fail to reach them or meet their needs; and language and cultural barriers in gaining access to information and services. Cabinet Office, 2000, p.8.

Without robust data, it is impossible to tell whether the situation is changing for the black and minority ethnic population of the South West, or to know where resources should be targeted to effect positive change.

In effect, organisations told to evidence need in order to win funding for projects working with black and minority ethnic communities are being set up to fail by the difficulties they experience gathering data. In many cases, this data ought to be collected and made available by statutory authorities. In some cases, data is collected but is kept within agencies instead of being made easily accessible. Whenever a funding application is made, much time and effort is wasted searching for data to evidence need. This also means agencies are dependent on patchy and hearsay evidence to direct policy on future action.

Specific sources for data which I explored included:

Census 2001 data, available in full on DVD/CD by contacting the Office for National Statistics via their website : www.statistics.gov.uk/census/

Magne, Sam, 2003. *Multi-Ethnic Devon: A Rural Handbook*, Devon Racial Equality Council, available as a download in both full and summary form at : www.devonrec.org.uk/rural_handbook/foreword.htm

Two reports by Williams and Tacchi for the Black South West Network, not currently on the internet.

Williams, B. & J. Tacchi, 2001. *Mapping the Black Community and Voluntary Sector in the South West of England: The Role of the Black South West Network in a Regional Context*. Bristol: Black South West Network.

Williams, B. & J. Tacchi, 2005. *Mapping the Black Community and Voluntary Sector in the South West of England: The Role of the Black South West Network in a Regional Context (Draft report)*. Bristol: Black South West Network.

Bristol Neighbourhood Renewal. *State of the Neighbourhoods (SON)*, Management Intelligence for Regeneration in Bristol, available at: <http://www.bristolforward.net/evaluation/neighbourhoods.asp>

CEEDR, 2000. *Mapping Ethnic Minority Owned Businesses in Devon and Cornwall - Who Are They and What Are Their Needs?* PROSPER.

(PROSPER are now Business Link Devon & Cornwall, www.bldev.co.uk.)

Neighbourhood Renewal Floor Targets data, available on the website: www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/

Local neighbourhood data, available via the Neighbourhood Renewal website, or direct at: www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk

I also looked at the Multiple Deprivation Indices data available on the South West Observatory website www.swo.org.uk but for reasons I outline fully in the report, found these unhelpful.

Of particular interest was the report by Sam Magne for Devon Racial Equality Council. This report draws on available quantitative data, which it supplements with qualitative research. Magne developed an “isolation index” as part of her study, and this should be critically interrogated as a possible measure of need for rural black and minority ethnic populations. The report stands as an example of excellent research which should be imitated for other areas in the South West.

For reasons I explore fully in my report, I recommend particular tables from the Census 2001 data, which compare factors such as health, health of children, employment, etc with ethnicity, gender and age.

2. FULL REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A paper archive and a website should be established where research about the South West's black and minority ethnic population can be collated.
2. Continuous funding should be provided so that the paper and web-based archives can be regularly up-dated.
3. Particular tables from the 2001 Census should be extrapolated and made accessible at regional and ward level to assist evidencing need for the black and minority ethnic population.
4. The study conducted by Sam Magne for Devon Racial Equality Council should be considered in close detail to see how many of its findings can be extrapolated to relate to the rest of the region, and how much research would need to be undertaken to provide a similarly full picture of the rest of the South West's black and minority ethnic populations.
5. A thorough review of research gaps should be undertaken, examining where research should be done by statutory bodies, where it may be possible for it to be funded through charitable foundations and where academic or other partners can be sought. This review should be undertaken jointly by Black South West Network and statutory partners.
6. Black South West Network (and the Black Development Agency) should investigate ways to promote understanding

of the purposes for ethnic record-keeping and monitoring systems.

7. The potential of the “isolation index” developed by Sam Magne for Devon Racial Equality Council for better understanding of rural black and minority ethnic population needs to be explored, although its robustness as a statistical measure must be critically interrogated.
8. Workshops aimed at collating further data and providing the black and minority ethnic voluntary and community sector with understanding of how to access and use data in evidencing need should be organised.
9. Supporting Evidence for Local Delivery (SELD) and the South West Observatory should be approached with a view to asking them to help put into effect the recommendations of the report.

3. FUTURE RESEARCH

In terms of future research, the following areas need to be considered.

Research must take into consideration the different research situations of different areas of the South West. Although much data ought to be available in Bristol, this is not collated into a single resource and there are likely to be significant gaps exposed when a thorough review of research is undertaken. Other large urban areas of the South West are likely to have some data available but again poorly collated and showing gaps when research is reviewed. Research in rural areas apart from Devon is virtually non-existent.

Support should be provided to allow public sector bodies and community representatives from the black and minority ethnic populations of the South West to regularly review and progress equalities action, which is now legally required of all major institutions. Such support might take the initial form of conferences which could bring together public sector bodies and community representatives from a range of populations, including the black and minority ethnic population, disability action groups and other disadvantaged communities. (One reason for pursuing this collaborative approach would be the better availability of funding under a “community cohesion” heading.)

There is also scope for further collaborative work with the region's tourist boards and business support organisations. A little research has been undertaken in these areas, but the organisations themselves are not necessarily aware of it. Awareness of the benefits of improved race relations in the region needs to be raised, as does awareness of the need for further research and implementation of the recommendations of existing research.

There are many areas where research could be supported by external bodies, for example, opportunities for academic research into innovative areas which also supports public policy should be explored. (These could include projects such as research on identity issues in Cornwall, where issues of ethnicity and race are complicated by strong local nationalism.) In addition, universities may be able to undertake small monitoring projects as student experience, of mutual benefit to under-funded small voluntary groups needing some assistance and social science students looking for experience in monitoring. (I would be happy to advise further about such opportunities.)

4. THE WAY FORWARD

A working group has been established to take the recommendations of this report forward and work has begun on setting up a facility on the South West Information Directory (SouthWestID or SWID) under which reports and data-sets which are relevant to black and minority ethnic populations in the region can be collated. The working group on Improving Data Provision for Black and Minority Ethnic Populations in the South West (IDP BME working group) has the following members:

Black South West Network

Equality South West

South West Observatory

SELD

Independent consultant (report author)

Black Development Agency

An event is being planned:

- to launch the report
- to raise awareness of the problems being caused by poor data provision in this area
- to collect further reports and data-sets in this area
- to run workshops on collecting data and on using available data-sets.

It is planned to invite further interested stakeholder groups from the voluntary and community sector (e.g. traveller community groups, migrant communities' groups, Race Equality Councils), statutory authorities and institutions (councils, Primary Care Trusts, Police) and South West University research centres.

5. REPORT SUMMARY

In the first year, the research brief was refined in the light of a mis-match between the general assumption of the agencies involved, that quantitative data was ‘out there somewhere’ and just needed to be brought together, and the reality of very poor ethnicity record-keeping on the ground

Magne, 2003, p.24

Section 2 Introduction – South West region: the urban and the rural. The black and minority ethnic population of the South West may be found both in major cities, with all the characteristics described in a large body of literature on black and minority ethnic urban communities, and in scattered rural areas, in a different situation currently being written about in a small but growing body of research on rural black and minority ethnic settlement. I describe problems faced in Bristol; here ethnic record-keeping and monitoring (erkm) is patchy and where research has been done, it is not made available in central sources. I also talk about the different set of difficulties faced by both residents and visitors to the South West’s rural areas. I stress the importance of changing racist attitudes if tourism is to continue to develop.

Section 3 The South West – background. In this section of the report, I give a general background to the South West region, considered from the perspective of the black and minority ethnic population. I describe

the history of black and minority ethnic settlement in the region. (In the nineteenth century most of Britain's black population – about 10,000 people – lived in the West Country.) I recommend that historical links with the slave trade should be commemorated to properly support black tourists seeking to comprehend this history. I also discuss tourism, the biggest industry in the South West region, in relation to a report for what was then PROSPER (now Business Link Devon & Cornwall). This report highlighted the need for minority ethnic run food outlets to support a modern tourist industry.

I look at the most recent population figures from the 2001 Census, finding that the South West as a whole has a much lower proportion of black and minority ethnic people than England in general (2.3%, compared to 9%). However, the percentage black and minority ethnic population in the South West's cities and Bristol in particular (8.9%) approaches the national level. I point out that the black and minority ethnic population of the South West increased from 1.4% in the 1991 census, to 2.3% in 2001. This means the black and minority ethnic population now, 5 years on from the 2001 Census, is likely to be 50% greater than it was in 2001, at 3.5% and rising. This is at a time when we have a rising elderly population, particularly in retirement zones in the South West, and a higher need of people willing to work in the caring professions which many black and minority ethnic people have chosen as careers.

Finally, I look at current theory about “knowledge economies”. Some argue that we are moving away from manufacturing towards “knowledge economies” and I talk about how the black and minority

ethnic population are seen to contribute to a good knowledge economy environment and also about how the demands for a highly qualified workforce under “knowledge economies” may squeeze certain ethnic groups who continue to under-perform at school, even further out of regular employment.

Section 4 Qualitative and quantitative research findings. Here, I begin by discussing the problematic ethnic record-keeping and monitoring systems situation in the South West. I give a general background to research done in the region, before providing more detailed accounts of some sources I looked at for data. These include: Sam Magne’s report for Devon Racial Equality Council, Multiple Deprivation Indices and other data from the South West Observatory, Sam Magne’s Isolation Index, the Census 2001, data on the Neighbourhood Renewal website and some data from Neighbourhood Renewal projects in Bristol.

Section 5 Examples of good practice. Although it was not part of my remit to list examples of good practice, I have listed those I came across here in case this is of use in future research.

Section 6 Barriers to good practice. In this section, I cover five barriers to good practice in local government service provision for those from the black and minority ethnic population. These five barriers are:

1.1 The numbers-led approach. Local authorities sometimes dismiss issues of race politics as irrelevant on the grounds

that there is only a small black and minority ethnic population in the area. Here I recommend a “needs-led” rather than “numbers-led” approach to service provision.

1.2 The individual not social model of race relations.

Service providers sometimes view the problems of race relations from the point of view of individual members of the black and minority ethnic population, rather than from the point of view of social problems which prevent some members of society leading full active lives.

1.3 The status-quo approach.

Local authorities often accept a low and poor level of service provision in areas where the black and minority ethnic population are settled because that is how it has always been. I discuss here the problem of mis-directed regeneration funding, which national government has aimed at black and minority ethnic communities but which studies in Bristol argue often fails to reach its targeted recipients.

1.4 The diversity approach.

Local authorities sometimes argue that action to support the black and minority ethnic population should not be funded because it leads to placing those people above people with other needs, in particular disabled people. Here I give evidence from Bristol-based studies of how the term ‘equalities communities’ does not work as the broad-based term inclusive of ‘race equality’ which it might be supposed to do, and takes resources

away from black and minority ethnic communities in need rather than leading to support for them.

1.5 Supplicants and combatants, not partners. Where resources are hard fought over, local authority workers may come to see voluntary sector agencies lobbying on behalf of particular constituencies, such as disabled people; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people; or people from the black and minority ethnic population, as supplicants who should quietly respect council funding decisions or hostile combatants fighting with them over those decisions, rather than partners in mapping out and evaluating the proper provision of services.

Section 7 Public sector bodies in the South West. Here I made a quick comparison of race equality schemes being developed by the different public sector bodies in the region. (This work has the potential to be further developed in a separate project funded by the statutory bodies themselves.)

Section 8 Conclusion.

6. SOURCES FOR DATA

South West specific

Bristol Neighbourhood Renewal, State of the Neighbourhoods data, [http://www.bristolforward.net/downloads/SON%20Education%20The%20Report%20\(May%202005\).pdf](http://www.bristolforward.net/downloads/SON%20Education%20The%20Report%20(May%202005).pdf), accessed 6/4/06.

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ODPM, August 2004. *Ethnicity Monitoring: Benefit. Guidance for Partnerships on Monitoring Benefit*. Wetherby: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

ODPM, August 2004. *Ethnicity Monitoring: Involvement. Guidance for Partnerships on Monitoring Involvement*. Wetherby: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

ODPM, April 2004. *Race Equality and Neighbourhood Renewal: Second edition*. Wetherby: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Neighbourhood Renewal guides to ethnic monitoring data sources:

Employment: <http://www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Solving%20the%20Problem/Guideemdataemployment.doc>

Housing: <http://www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Solving%20the%20Problem/Guideemdatahousing.doc>

Liveability: <http://www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/>

[Solving%20the%20Problem/Guideemdataliveability.doc](http://www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Solving%20the%20Problem/Guideemdataliveability.doc)

Education: [http://www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/
Solving%20the%20Problem/Guideemdataeducation.doc](http://www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Solving%20the%20Problem/Guideemdataeducation.doc)

Crime: [http://www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/
Solving%20the%20Problem/Guideemdatacrime.doc](http://www.renewal.net/Documents/RNET/Solving%20the%20Problem/Guideemdatacrime.doc)

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