

WERS 2004: TTWA VARIABLES

Introduction

Undertakings made to respondents at the time of the WERS 2004 survey require that data which might make it possible to identify respondents are not available on general release. Therefore, the publicly available WERS 2004 datasets do not contain any geographical identifier below Government Office Region level. However, in order to facilitate research which takes into account characteristics of the local area in which the establishment is located, and after consulting with users, the WERS Information and Advice Service have made available a small number of variables at Travel to Work Area (TTWA) level. These include unemployment and vacancy rates. The data are provided for all workplaces surveyed in the WERS 2004 Cross-Section Management survey.

To facilitate further geographical matching, the postcodes of each individual surveyed workplace are to be added to the WERS 2004 deposit within the Virtual Micro-Data Laboratory operated by the Office for National Statistics:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/bdl/>.

Overview

The geographical data available for matching on to the WERS 2004 Management Questionnaire (MQ) consists of the following variables:

SERNO	Unique establishment identifier from the WERS 2004 MQ
AREA	Anonymised indicator of the Travel to Work Area (TTWA) in which the workplace was located at the time of interview
URATE	Unemployment rate in the TTWA
VRATE	Vacancy rate in the TTWA
UVRATIO	Ratio of unemployment to vacancies in the TTWA
URBRUR	Classification of the TTWA in which the establishment was located: urban or rural
ETHSHAR	Percentage of the population of the TTWA belonging to an ethnic minority group

Users can match these variables on to the WERS 2004 Cross-section Survey of Managers using the unique workplace identifier (SERNO). The construction of the variables is described in full later in this document.

We have sought to provide the data at as disaggregated a level as possible. However, it has been necessary to band the rate variables – across the full distribution in some cases and at the extremes in others – in order to prevent the deduction of TTWA identities via unique values.

A note on the identification of TTWAs

Establishments were sampled from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) in September 2003. The IDBR gave the address and postcode of the local unit, or workplace. The postcode given on the IDBR was verified at the time of fieldwork, and

in the small number of cases where it was found to be incorrect, or to have changed following sampling, the new postcode was recorded. These updated postcodes (correct at the time of fieldwork) have been used as the basis for the TTWA matching.

Having obtained an up-to-date postcode for each surveyed establishment, the November 2004 National Statistics Postcode Directory (NSPD, but known at the time as the All Fields Postcode Directory) was used to identify the TTWA in which each postcode was located. The November 2004 version of the NSPD was used in preference to earlier or later versions as it was the first in the series to be available in Access, rather than Excel format, making it easier to export the data into SPSS. It was also thought preferable to use a version of the NSPD as close to the timing of the median WERS interview as possible, to avoid difficulties in matching postcodes from the two sources where a long period of time elapsed between verifying the postcode of the establishment, and the timing of the NSPD.

In the vast majority of cases the postcodes recorded for the surveyed workplaces could be located on the November 2004 NSPD. In the small number of instances where a match on the NSPD could not be found, the postcode for the address of the establishment was checked from other sources, such as the Royal Mail postcode search facility or other internet search. In most cases this indicated that there was a small error in the postcode recorded on the WERS sample file e.g. one digit or letter was incorrect. In some instances, the postcode was incomplete, or missing, but it was possible to obtain the full postcode for the address. However, in two cases, it was only possible to identify the postcode sector in which the establishment was located, due to the nature of the establishment. Nevertheless, it was possible to identify the TTWAs in which these establishments were located, as the postcode sector fell entirely within a single TTWA.

The TTWA boundaries are those published in May 1998, which were based on the 1991 census. These were the TTWAs in place at the time of WERS 2004.

Variable descriptions¹

URATE: The unemployment rate within the TTWA at the time of the median WERS interview i.e. July 2004. Constructed from Jobcentre Plus records of the total number of claimants within the TTWA as a percentage of the estimated mid-2001 resident working-age population (defined as the number of people in the TTWA between the ages of 16 and 64 for men, and 16-59 for women, and based on the 2001 census). Grouped into seven categories.

VRATE: The vacancy rate within the TTWA at the time of the median WERS interview i.e. July 2004. Constructed from the total number of vacancies notified to Jobcentre Plus in the TTWA in July 2004, expressed as a percentage of the estimated mid-2001 resident working age population (defined as for URATE). Grouped into seven categories.

UVRATIO: The ratio of the total number of unemployed people to the total number of vacancies notified to Jobcentre Plus within the TTWA in July 2004. Sources are as described for URATE and VRATE. Where the ratio of unemployed to vacancies is unique to a TTWA, the data was banded. This was necessary only at the extremes of the distribution.

ETHSHAR: The percentage of those living within the TTWA from an ethnic minority group, as recorded in the 2001 census. The ethnic minority classification differed slightly between the censuses in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Ethnic minorities are defined as those belonging to any of the following groups:

- o Mixed: White and Black Caribbean; White and Black African; White and Asian; Other Mixed.
- o Asian or Asian British: Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Other Asian.
- o Black or Black British: Caribbean; African; Other Black.
- o Chinese or other Ethnic Group: Chinese; Other Ethnic Group (inc Irish Traveller).

Census data based on output areas was converted to TTWAs, although in a small number of cases, it was not possible to match output areas to TTWAs. Where less than three TTWAs had the same value on ETHSHAR, the data was banded.

URBRUR: Based on ONS classifications that categorise output areas into different types of urban or rural locality. The ONS classification for England and Wales is different to that used in Scotland, and so our derived variable preserves the different classifications used in each region. The user guide for the November 2004 NSPD provides a full description of the categories (see references below). A brief description of each category on our derived variable is given below:

England and Wales:

1. Urban settlement; surrounding area sparsely populated
2. Small town and fringe; ...sparse...
3. Village; ...sparse...

¹ The rate variables use the mid-2001 resident working age population as the denominator since this is currently the only resident working age population data available for TTWAs.

4. Hamlet or isolated dwelling; ...sparse...
5. Urban settlement; surrounding area less sparsely populated
6. Small town and fringe; ...less sparse...
7. Village; ...less sparse...
8. Hamlet or isolated dwelling; ...less sparse...

Scotland:

11. Large urban area (Scotland)
12. Other urban area
13. Accessible small town
14. Remote small town
15. Very remote small town
16. Accessible rural area
17. Remote rural area
18. Very remote rural area

As with ETHSHAR, output areas cannot be mapped on to the TTWA in a small number of cases.

AREA: identifies establishments within the same TTWA. Anonymized so that the value does not correspond to the number assigned to the TTWA by the Office for National Statistics. Provided to facilitate multi-level analysis.

Further information

Users are advised to consult the sources listed in the references section and the ONS website in order to obtain further information on the origins (and limitations) of the data from which the derived variables are constructed.

To facilitate further geographical matching, the postcodes of each individual surveyed workplace are to be added to the WERS 2004 deposit within the Virtual Micro-Data Laboratory operated by the Office for National Statistics:
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/bdl/>.

The deposit at the Virtual Micro-Data Laboratory will also include unbanded versions of URATE, VRATE, UVRATIO and ETHSHAR.

TTWA variables for matching on to the WERS 1998 Cross-Section Management Interview data are also available. This dataset provides variables for the unemployment rate, the vacancy rate and the unemployed to vacancies ratio. Users should note that the 1998 data on vacancies is not comparable with that for 2004. The introduction of Jobcentre Plus resulted in vacancy data being inconsistent pre and post introduction. Arrowsmith (2003) explains the various reasons for the under-recording of vacancy data prior to the introduction of the new system, noting that vacancy notifications increased by approximately twenty per cent under the new system

In addition, TTWA variables are also available for matching on to the WERS 1998-2004 Panel Dataset. In addition to the variables described above, this dataset also contains an additional variable (URATECHG) indicating the change in the unemployment rate in the TTWA in which the workplace is located, over the period 1998 to 2004.

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