



RTPI

Royal Town Planning Institute

Using the APS to explore the planning profession – findings and challenges

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What I will cover

- About the RTPI and the planning profession
- Brief introduction to and findings from our 2019 report, The UK Planning Profession in 2019 (rtpi.org.uk/planningprofession)
- How we used the APS, the problems with faced, and our solutions.

About the RTPI

The Royal Town Planning Institute champions the power of planning in creating prosperous places and vibrant communities.

- 25,000 members who are mostly ‘town planners’ working in local authorities, private consultancies and other organisations.
- Town planners help to shape places by pro-actively developing plans for everything from individual developments to entire regions. They also scrutinize planning applications (e.g. from homeowners and developers)
- Learned society dedicated to advancing ‘art and science’ of town planning

The UK Planning Profession in 2019

Findings on the size and makeup of
the UK town planning profession

The brief

- How many planners are there in the UK?
- Where do they work?
- Demographics
- Locational distribution
- Comparing profession as a whole to RTPI members



The data

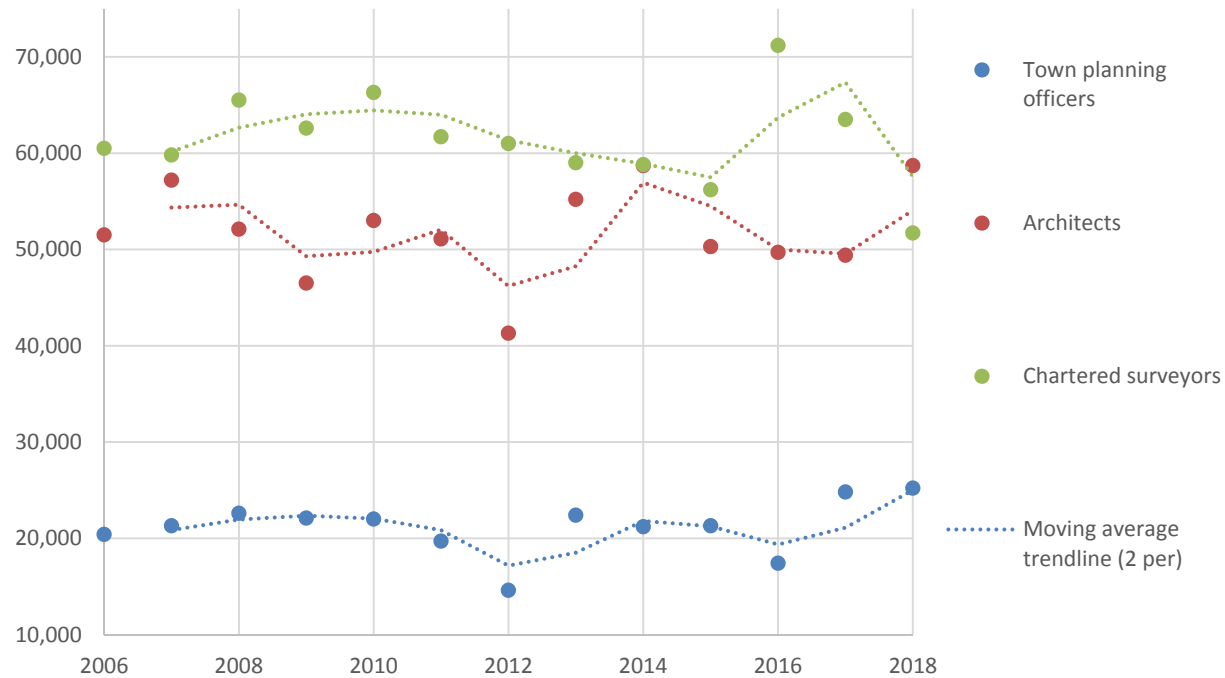
- RTPI Membership Survey and member data (filtered for working UK planners only)
- Annual Population Survey
- EUROSTAT Labour Force Survey

All limited in different ways and we attempted to gain insight by using them together



Findings: Number of planners in the UK

Figure 1: Number of selected built environment occupations over time

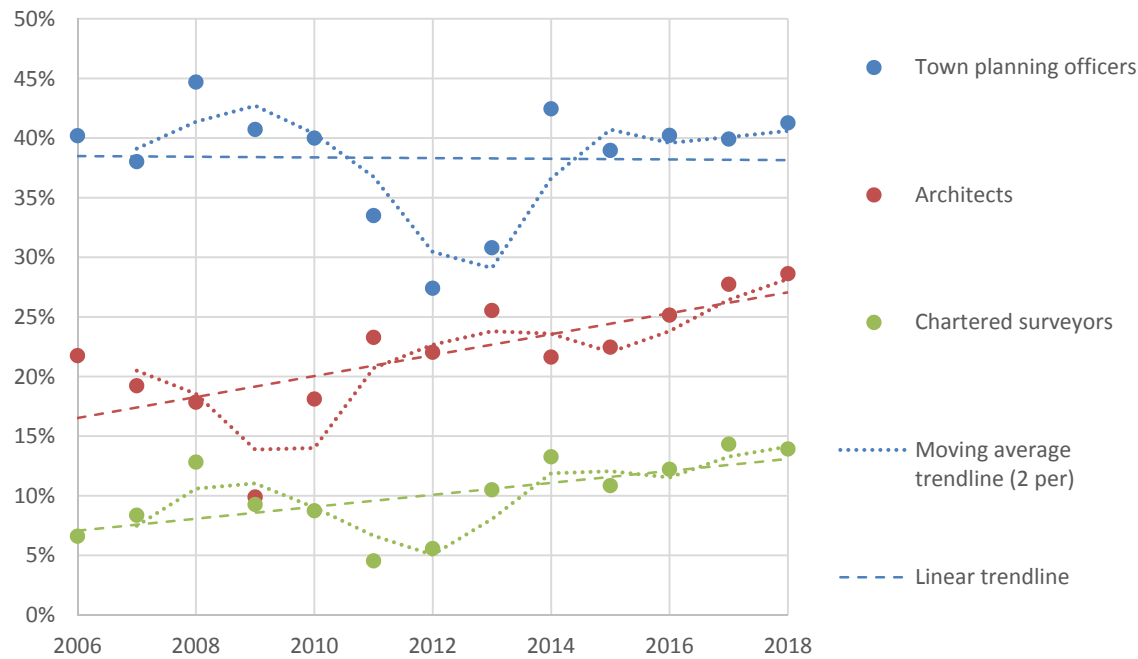


Source: ONS Annual Population Survey filtered by SOC10M codes relating to each built environment occupation. Numbers rounded to nearest thousand. Years refer to year ending September that year.



Findings: Demographics of UK planning profession

Figure 2: Proportion of each built environment profession who are women over time



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey, filtered by SOC10M for selected built environment occupations.



Findings: Distribution of planners around the UK

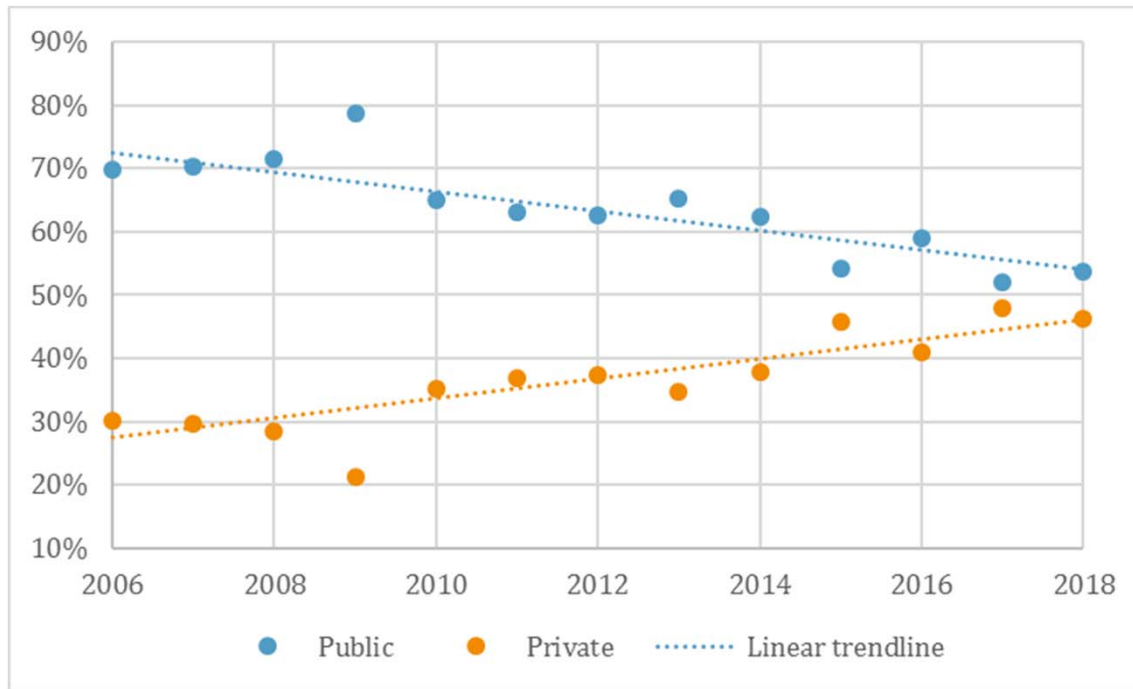
Table 1: Estimated proportion and number of planners from each nation and region across RTPI and APS data

	RTPI members ¹	RTPI Member Survey ²	APS town planning officers ³	APS general population ⁴	Estimated number of planners ⁵
Nation	Estimated % in each population group				Estimated n
England	83%	83%	84%	85%	18300
Wales	5%	5%	5%	4%	1000
Scotland	9%	10%	6%	8%	2000
Northern Ireland	3%	2%	6%	3%	600
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	22000
English region (% of whole UK)					
North East	3%	3%	6%	4%	700
North West	10%	9%	9%	11%	2200
Yorkshire and The Humber	6%	5%	4%	8%	1200
East Midlands	6%	6%	7%	7%	1300
West Midlands	7%	8%	7%	8%	1600
East of England	9%	9%	9%	10%	2100
London	13%	13%	16%	14%	2800
South East	18%	16%	17%	14%	3900
South West	11%	12%	8%	9%	2500
Total	83%	83%	84%	85%	18300

Sources: (1) RTPI Member data filtered by 'UK town planning officer' group, (2) RTPI Member Survey 2017 filtered by 'UK town planning officer' Group, (3) ONS Annual Population Survey filtered by SOC10M 2432: Town Planning Officers - figures based on average of 5 years to September 2018 and rounded to nearest hundred, (4) ONS Annual Population Survey, (5) Estimates derived from estimated number of planners in APS and % in each nation from RTPI membership records and rounded to nearest hundred.

Findings: Employers of UK planners

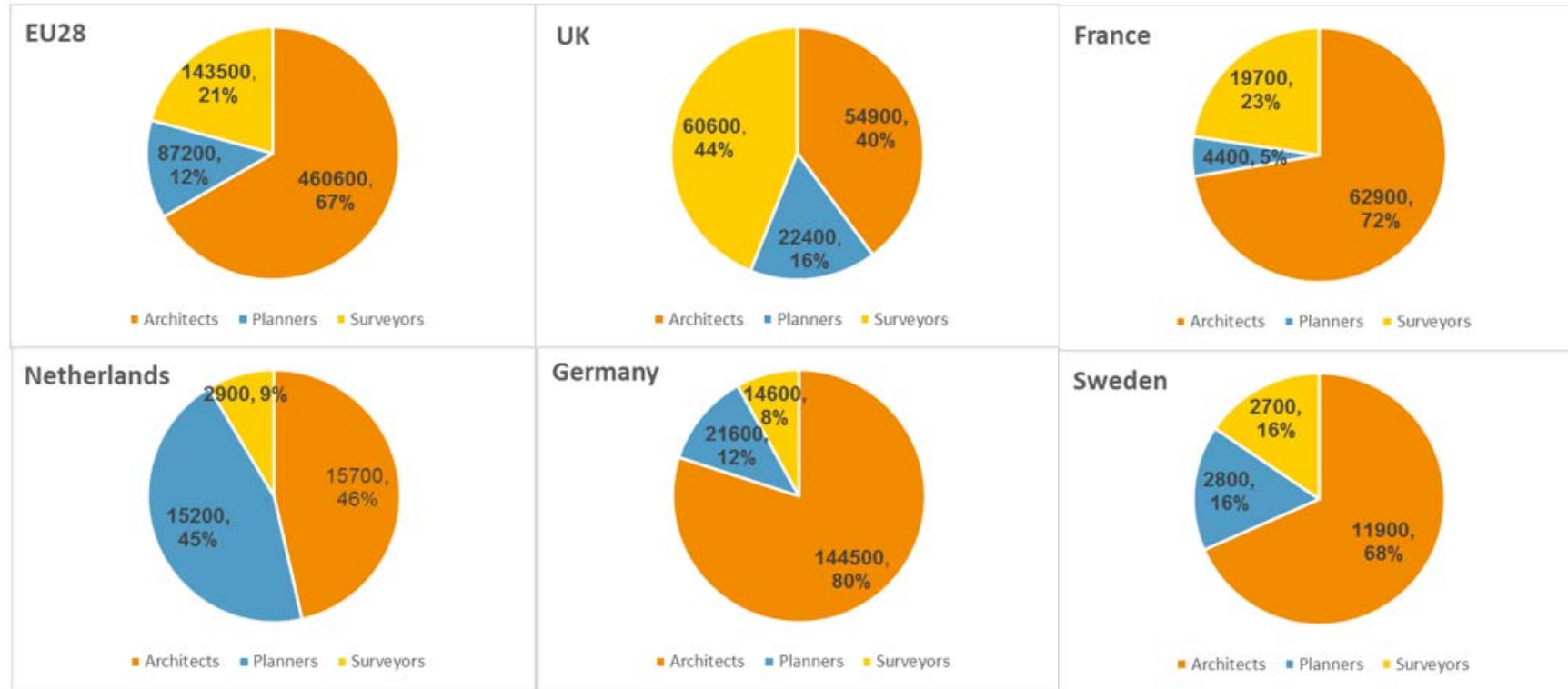
Figure 4: Proportion of planners in public and private sectors over time



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey, filtered by SOC10M = 2432 (Planners). Result for each year is based on period ending September that year.



Findings: Comparing the UK planning profession with EU



Source: EUROSTAT European Labour Force Survey filtered for ISCO 4 digit occupational codes for selected built environment occupations. Values are five year averages.

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Using the APS to explore the planning profession – APS Conference 27/11/19



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Impact: How we and others are using this data

- Understanding position of planning in wider built environment sector
- Informing RTPI's diversity strategy
- Testing our member data and RTPI's representativeness of the profession
- Raising further questions about how the profession is changing e.g. 'The 21st Century Planner' and 'How many planners are needed?'
- Targeting new members and exploring pipeline into planning



Using RTPI Member Survey and ONS labour force survey data we estimate:

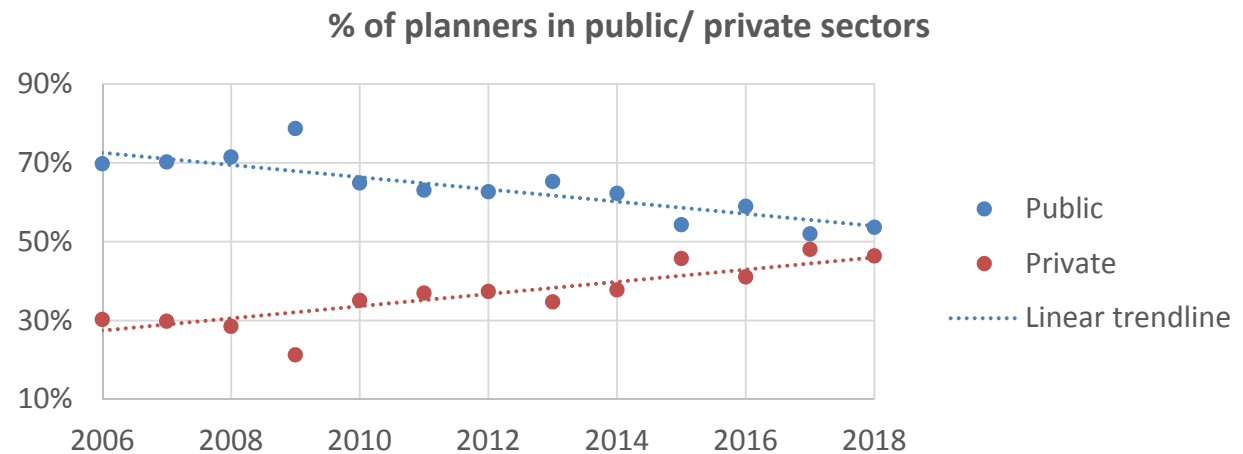
- About 9,000 local authority planners in England
- Proportion of planners working in the public sector down 15% in the last decade



22,000 planners in the UK compared to 53,400 architects and 60,300 chartered surveyors



1 planner for every 3,000 people in the UK, compared to one for every 1,100 in the Netherlands



The Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment launches Promise scholarships to diversify sector

11 November 2019

UCL's Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment today launches The Bartlett Promise to offer scholarships worth a total of £1.2 million per year to students from under-represented backgrounds.

According to data compiled in 2019 by the Royal Town Planning Institute from the [Office for National Statistics' Annual Population Survey](#), 59% of planners, 75% of architects and 87% of chartered surveyors are male.

Practitioners from a BAME background make up 3-4% of planning professionals, 9% of architects and 4% of chartered surveyors, even though UK Census data from 2011 shows that 14% of the UK population identifies as coming from a [minority ethnic background](#).



Methodological approach and issues

How we used the APS and the limitations of the approach

Why the APS was attractive to us

- RTPI member data (limited data covering all members and nothing on non-members)
- RTPI Membership Survey (relatively big sample but can't tell us anything about non-members. Also questions around representativeness.
- Annual Population Survey – chance of providing representative sample of UK planning profession?



Main issues with using the APS

- Unclear how 'Town Planning Officer' links to what we consider the profession to be
- Small total sample of Town Planning Officers (circa 100 for each year)
- Very small/ unreliable subsamples (e.g. TPOs working in Wales)
- 2017-18 estimates of size of profession higher than other years



Our solutions

- Taking five year average from APS estimates.
- Making the limitations clear – best available data but consume with caution.
- Comparing APS to our member data and survey
- Avoiding estimates based on small sub-samples and which look clearly wrong (e.g. vary dramatically year on year)



Was our approach justified?

- APS estimates matches our member records in virtually every area where we have estimates for each. APS also matches estimates in another recent survey of the profession.
- But still need to be clear about limitations



Learning relating to APS

- The data is very useful (with limitations)
 - Some APS estimates are clearly unreliable (arguably estimates should not have been provided for e.g. number of TPOs in Wales)
- It is limiting not being able to work with data
 - BUT ONS are great! Patient and helpful
- Would be fantastic to include SOC10M codes in other surveys





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**Thanks for listening.
Questions, comments,
critiques?**

<https://www.rtpi.org.uk/planningprofession>

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