Q-Step Internship at the Home Office

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In summer 2015 I undertook an 8 week Q-Step internship at the Home Office in London within the Crime and Policing Analysis Unit. This unit aims to provide evidence and analysis to ministers and policymakers to support decisions on crime and policing topics and policies.

Summary

During the eight weeks I worked at the Home Office I had the opportunity to work on a number of research projects however, my main project was focused on vehicle theft. I was tasked with this after it was identified as a priority area for research.

I examined two new datasets as the main data sources to identify patterns and trends in vehicle theft.

In initially comparing the datasets the analysis showed a sufficient level of comparability which suggested that each contained a large enough sample to be able to analyse the 'real' vehicle crime picture.

I attended meetings with other members of staff to discuss my findings and discuss next steps. I also met with external organisations to discuss the issue of vehicle crime.

Key Skills

Microsoft Excel

- Mathematical calculations: % changes, proportions and rates

- Time series techniques: indexing, moving averages, secondary axes, year-on-year and month-on-month comparisons

- Logical formulae: nested if statements, lookup and index/match functions

- Data manipulation formulae: countif, sumif

- Chart creation and manipulation

- Scatterplots and correlation coefficients

Microsoft Word and PowerPoint

- Reporting analysis how government analysts would using concise, clear sentences and making sure the reader knows why they are being provided with the information
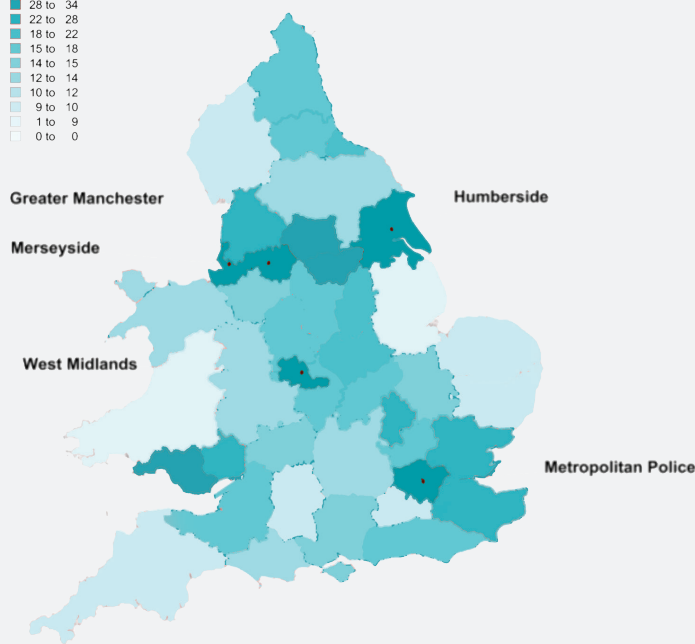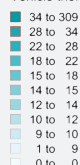
MapInfo

- Formatting data to be imported into the software

- Mapping hotspots by police force area

- Clear labelling of the areas of interest

General:

- Awareness of policy environment

- Understanding the concept of sensitivity analysis and when it is used and why it is useful

Vehicle thefts per 10,000 population
- 34 to 309
- 28 to 34
- 22 to 28
- 18 to 22
- 15 to 18
- 14 to 15
- 12 to 14
- 10 to 12
- 9 to 10
- 1 to 9
- 0 to 0

Greater Manchester
Merseyside
West Midlands
Humberside
Metropolitan Police

2014 Annual vehicle theft rate per 10,000 by police force area

The annual theft rate for 2014 was calculated using DVLA statistics from the Department for Transport on the number of licensed vehicles and police recorded crime data for England and Wales on vehicle thefts.

This data was then imported into MapInfo to create this map.

MPS			Rest of E&W		
13/14	14/15	% change	13/14	14/15	%change
20,726	21,955	6%	54,582	53,849	-1%

Vehicle theft in the Metropolitan Police Service and the rest of England and Wales Source: Police Recorded Crime data

Conclusion

Since the datasets that I was using were of an 'Official Sensitive' nature, I cannot discuss the majority of my findings concerning this issue.

The report, which contained recommendations for further research, was finalised on 3rd September. It was sent to the leader of the Crime Patterns team for reading before circulation to all the relevant vehicle crime contacts.