
Chair of the UK Statistics Authority, Sir Michael Scholar KCB

Dr. Tony Wright MP
Chair, Public Administration Select Committee
House of Commons
LONDON SW1A 0AA

8 May 2009

Dear Tony

PUBLICATION OF MIGRATION AND WORKFORCE STATISTICS: 26 MARCH 2009

Towards the end of the oral evidence session of the House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee on 26 March 2009 at which Lord Rowe-Beddoe, Karen Dunnell and Richard Alldritt gave evidence, you asked (Q122) whether the UK Statistics Authority would be producing a further report on the 24 February 2009 release of migration statistics by the Office for National Statistics, along similar lines to our published review of ONS's 11 February release. In reply, Lord Rowe-Beddoe indicated that the Authority would look into the matter.

I am now writing to inform you that we have considered the 24 February release and concluded that it does not raise any new issues over and above those covered in our report on the 11 February release. Mr Woolas and others drew attention to the title of the 24 February release and the first substantive sentence of the text, and queried whether country of birth is in fact a migration statistic (Qq 71-2). The Statistics Authority agrees that the release should have contained more explanation and commentary in this regard. In reply to a question from Mr Heyes (Q99), Karen Dunnell informed the Committee that ONS was already looking at all of its press releases with this issue in mind. In view of this the Statistics Authority feels that it is not necessary to prepare a report on the 24 February release.

I hope this deals with the outstanding question. I would, of course, be ready to discuss the matter further should you or the Committee wish to do so.

Yours sincerely



Sir Michael Scholar KCB