
Director General for Regulation

Iain Bell
Deputy National Statistician – Population and Public Policy
Office for National Statistics

14 March 2018

Dear Iain

Statistics on Household Projections in England

I am writing to you in advance of the forthcoming publication of the 2016-based *Household Projections in England*, due to be published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in summer 2018.

We welcome the transfer of these statistics from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to ONS in early 2017, which provides an opportunity for greater consistency between household and subnational population projections. We also welcome ONS's public consultation between January and March 2017 on proposed changes to the methodology, to gain users' feedback on ONS's intention to develop an improved, simplified methodology to produce the projections.

We think that ONS's public response to the consultation, published on 30 June 2017, setting out the plans to develop the projections, and establishing a Household Projections Collaborative Group to provide expert advice on this research and longer-term development of the projections, is very positive.

In view of the planned methods changes and the high profile of household projections, we will be reviewing these statistics shortly after publication. This is standard practice after such changes and will look to ensure they continue to meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value and therefore retain their National Statistics status. We think it would be appropriate for you to explain their status clearly when they are published. We suggest the text: 'These statistics have not yet been formally reviewed for compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics since their transfer from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The Office for Statistics Regulation will conduct this review in the near future'.

We recognise that ONS has recently publicly announced a provisional date for the forthcoming publication. We would strongly encourage ONS to publish the confirmed date as soon as is practicable and to be open about plans aimed at improving methods and quality. My team have been engaging with the relevant statisticians at ONS about ongoing developments; I would appreciate future updates from your team about the development of supporting material that will provide the reasons for, and the nature and extent of changes, as well as an explanation of how the quality of the statistics is assured. We will take these developments into account as part of our review of these statistics.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation