

Dear Ed,

***Office for Statistics Regulation External Scrutiny Programme***

Thank you for sharing in high-level terms your proposal, which builds on a pre-existing programme of OSR assessments, to enhance the governance procedures for the UK statistical system's production of economic statistics now that we have left Eurostat, via an External Scrutiny Programme. We would welcome the opportunity to continue to provide input on the design of this extension of your role. We have a strong and shared interest in assuring our users that our key economic statistics are of the highest quality.

We agree that the pilot on PPIs you are currently undertaking will be useful in developing the new arrangements and look forward to working with you as you take it forwards. In particular it will be a good way to ensure that your new assessments do not overlap with the enhanced quality measures that we are implementing within ONS. It would be useful to develop guidance and requirements following the pilot to ensure the smooth running of reviews and best use of expert time. I would also suggest that you think about a pilot for economic statistics published in the wider GSS.

I am pleased to know from our conversation that you are not planning to invite other NSIs or international bodies such as the IMF to carry out these assessments, but rather that individual, international experts might be commissioned by you. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the potential for expert input on individual assessments – the global pool of experts is sometimes small.

I am also pleased that you were able to clarify that the OSR's focus was international best practice rather than international comparability per se and the ONS might want to diverge e.g. where it was world leading. I see that the response from NSCASE makes a related point on their role in advising the National Statistician on these matters, for example if OSR's reviews identify that following a particular piece of international guidance would impair the UK system's ability to meet user needs.

I look forward to engaging with you on the next level of detail of the proposals as the pilot progresses.

Yours,

Sam Beckett

