
Mark Pont, Assessment Programme Lead

Alex Lambert, Director of Surveys
Darren Morgan, Director of Economic Statistics Production & Analysis
Office for National Statistics (ONS)

Gillian McCrory, Survey Modernisation & Population Statistics
Gerard Colgan, Economic and Labour Market Statistics
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)
(by email)

10 July 2023

Dear Alex, Darren, Gillian, Gerard

Transformation of the Labour Force Survey in Great Britain and Northern Ireland

We continue to review ONS's transformation of the Labour Force Survey (TLFS) against the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). Since our [last update](#), NISRA has decided to continue to use its existing Labour Force Survey (NI LFS) to produce NI labour market indicators until the second half of 2024. At that point NISRA intends to move to a transformed Labour Force Survey labelled the Northern Ireland Labour Market Survey (NI LMS) – this will be broadly similar to the ONS TLFS. This means that in early 2024 UK-wide key labour market statistics will come from a combination of the ONS TLFS for Great Britain and the NI LFS for Northern Ireland.

It is reassuring to hear that ONS and NISRA are working closely together to agree a common set of variables for key labour market indicators at a UK level. However, at present, it is unclear what impact ongoing transformation may have, if any, on UK-wide key labour market indicators.

Engagement between ONS and NISRA is vital to ensure consistency in UK-wide key labour market indicators. As soon as the cross-UK approach is finalised, and to reassure users on the impact of the decisions made, ONS and NISRA need to publicly communicate its plans and approach in a coherent and joined-up way. This should include any likely impact on statistical outputs and UK-wide key labour market indicators.

We have agreed with NISRA to start a review of the NI LMS, alongside our review of ONS's TLFS. My team will be in contact with NISRA in due course to discuss plans.

I am copying this letter to Dr David Marshall, Director of Census & Social Statistics, NISRA and Rachel Skentelbery, Deputy Head of Profession for Statistics at ONS.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Pont', with a horizontal line underneath.

Mark Pont
Assessment Programme Lead