
Professor Sir Ian Diamond | National StatisticianEd Humpherson
Director General for Regulation
Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR)

8 April 2025

Dear Ed,

Office for Statistics Regulation Systemic Review of ONS Economic Statistics

Thank you for your letter dated 7 April 2025. The publication of the Systemic Review of ONS Economic Statistics reflects the vital role that the OSR plays in ensuring official statistics are of the highest-quality and can be trusted to provide accurate measures of the UK economy, population and society.

I warmly welcome your findings that highlight the significant progress that we are making on a range of economic statistics outputs and for echoing the strong support the ONS has from many stakeholders.

I also recognise the need for strengthened user engagement and challenges with data quality. The conclusions drawn about data quality; the ONS's role in progressing the use of administrative data; and the ONS's strategy for- and prioritisation of- economic statistics, provides me with an opportunity to reflect on our progress across these areas so far.

As the global economy rapidly transforms, and society continuously evolves following the pandemic, it's more important than ever that the statistical system evolves in tandem. As National Statistician and Permanent Secretary, I assure you that the ONS is working at pace to successfully manage this evolution. This includes adapting to the difficult fiscal environment, taking the decisions necessary to continue to protect our core functions. Alongside this, as we – and our domestic and international partners – face falls in survey response rates, vital transformation work is being prioritised to ensure our surveys are put on a sustainable footing to secure high-quality statistical outputs for the long-term.

Producing high-quality economic statistics will continue to be at the forefront of our plans. Last week, we published our **Strategic Business Plan for 2025/2026**. This sets out our strategy for the coming financial year which will be with a renewed focus on our core economic and population statistics. This plan includes activities to be undertaken across our key economic indicators, including the Labour Market, Prices and GDP, and highlights the planning and prioritisation decisions that have been taken to support this.

Survey data are integral to the production of many of our economic statistics, including our labour market statistics. Following the conclusion of Sir Robert Devereux's review into the ONS, we will publish our **strategy for surveys** that will include an update on our survey quality improvement work over the last eighteen months, the further investment we are making over the year ahead and outlines our plans for surveys over the longer term. As part of this recovery, on 10 April, we will publish a **labour market transformation update** which will detail our plan for the transition of our published headline labour market statistics in

November 2026. As this will be data-led, transition could be in 2027 if users require more data to be collected and assessed.

In addition, once Sir Robert Devereux's review has concluded, I look forward to publishing the following pieces of work:

- **A strategy for economic statistics** for the Spending Review period which clearly sets out key priorities for developing and delivering economic statistics, in line with international frameworks and for addressing and resolving quality issues. This will be accompanied by an annually updated workplan outlining the key priorities, the funding attached to them and milestones for deliverables.
- **A data sourcing strategy** that integrates administrative and survey-based data sources. In particular, this will focus on how these data sources can align to improve economic statistics. This strategy will be updated regularly to ensure their continued prioritisation.
- **An updated statement on quality.** Quality is our number one priority and is paramount to our stakeholders and users. We will publish our strategic approach to quality management in the organisation including our actions to safeguard the quality of surveys and other data sources, and our approach to quality reviews and improvement activities undertaken across the ONS.

Amidst rapid economic, technological and societal change, I am hugely confident that, through the work already underway, and through the further action I've outlined, we are taking the necessary steps to produce high-quality economic statistics that are so vital to informing decision makers across government.

I look forward to our continued engagement as we work together to produce statistics for the public good.

Best regards,



Professor Sir Ian Diamond