
Ed Humpherson, Director General for Office for Statistics Regulation

James Benford
Director General for the Surveys and Economic Statistics Group
Office for National Statistics
(by email)

29 January 2026

Dear James,

ONS reports on progress with economic statistics, December 2025: OSR response

We have today [published our response](#) to the Office for National Statistics (ONS)'s [first quarterly progress reports](#) on its [Plan for Economic Statistics](#) and [Survey Improvement and Enhancement Plan](#). This update represents an important step for ONS in demonstrating its progress in response to the findings of OSR's systemic review of its economic statistics, including our [interim](#) and [final report](#), and the recommendations of the [Devereux review](#).

The report shows encouraging early progress. OSR particularly welcomes the resumption of regular publications of producer price statistics, the restoration of response rates to the Labour Force Survey to near pre-pandemic levels and the successful delivery of the Blue Book update. As well as ONS's transparency in communicating errors, stakeholders have also positively noted the strengthened engagement from ONS leadership and its increased openness around delivery challenges and decision making.

At the same time, the progress reports underline the scale and complexity of the programme now underway. Sustained progress will require continued prioritisation, realism in delivery planning and clear communication with users. To strengthen future reporting and enhance transparency for stakeholders, we recommend that ONS:

- Provide more succinct and accessible quarterly summaries, focused on prioritised user-facing milestones, with clearer information on progress, risk and changes to planned delivery timescales.
- Include more-disaggregated information on the costs of major outputs to support informed stakeholder engagement as part of its business planning processes.
- Report further on progress with quality reviews, workforce recruitment and retention, and replacing the legacy systems that underpin core economic statistics in the next update.

We expect ONS to iteratively implement these recommendations in the next two quarterly updates. These improvements will make clearer for users where progress is strongest, where risks remain, and how ONS is managing the programme as it evolves.

OSR will continue to monitor ONS's progress through its quarterly reporting cycle and will work constructively with ONS to support ongoing improvements to the quality, trustworthiness, and value of its economic statistics.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Humpherson', written in a cursive style.

Ed Humpherson
Director General for OSR