
Ed Humpherson, Director General for Office for Statistics Regulation

Steve Ellerd-Elliott
Head of Profession for Statistics
Department for Work and Pensions
(by email)

19 March 2026

Dear Steve

Family resources survey transformation and poverty and income statistics

Thank you for your detailed letter updating the progress of the Family Resources Survey (FRS) transformation programme and the forthcoming FRS-based poverty and income statistical releases due for publication on 26 March 2026.

I note your professional view that the three releases listed below remain suitable for publication as accredited official statistics:

- Family Resources Survey.
- Households Below Average Income.
- Pensioners' Incomes Statistics.

As you note, we have also received correspondence from the Chief Statisticians in Northern Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, and recognise that devolved governments have reached different classifications for their outputs due to specific challenges relating to small area analysis and the timing of access to linked administrative data. It is appropriate that statistical Heads of Profession reach their own judgements, reflecting the specific needs and uses of their respective statistics.

To maintain user confidence, we expect DWP to work with the devolved governments and for the outputs to coherently describe how the statistics can and cannot be used, and to clearly explain uncertainty in the estimates and trend comparisons. This is especially important for users where regional and sub-UK estimates are provided.

Given the scale of the transformation programme and the importance of the March 2026 publications, my team will shortly commence a compliance review of the FRS based statistics. This review will consider the steps taken to date, the extent to which the transformed statistics meet the standards of the Code of Practice, and any areas where further development or assurance may be required as DWP progresses through the next stages of its modernisation programme.

We welcome the constructive engagement we have had with DWP so far and look forward to working closely with you and your teams as the programme continues.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Humpherson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ed Humpherson
Director General for OSR