



**UK Statistics
Authority**

**Tenth Meeting of the
National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee**

Minute, Agenda and Papers

Tuesday 10 October 2017

10:30 – 14:10

Board Room, UK Statistics Authority
London

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

NATIONAL STATISTICIAN'S DATA ETHICS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Agenda

Tuesday 10 October
Board Room, Drummond Gate London
10:30am – 2:10pm

Chair: Mr Ian Cope

Apologies: Mr Rob Bumpstead, Ms Vanessa Cuthill, Prof. Martin Severs, Ms Annie Hitchman, Dr Brent Mittelstadt

(10:30am to 12:00pm)

1 10:30am	Minute and matters arising from the previous meeting	Ian Cope
2 10:35am	Chair's report	Oral report Ian Cope
3 10:50am	Forward planning for managing future work	Oral report Simon Whitworth and David Johnson
4 11:10am	Ethical review of the Crime Survey for England and Wales	NSDEC(17)20 John Flatley and Fiona Aitchinson
5 11:40am	IDEAS - Integrated Data Enabling Analysis and Statistics	Oral report Jon Wroth-Smith and Becky Tinsley

Lunch (12:00pm to 12:30pm)

(12:30pm to 2:00pm)

6 12:30pm	Opening access to the Ministry of Justice data	Presentation Steve Ellerd-Elliott
7 1:00pm	Linking prescription data to mortality data	NSDEC(17)21 Neil Bannister
8 1:20pm	MRP Projects considered via correspondence	NSDEC(17)23 Peter Stokes
9 1:30pm	MRP Projects considered via precedent	NSDEC(17)22 Peter Stokes
10 1:40pm	Ethnicity from names	Oral report Owen Abbot
11 1:55pm	Any other business	

Next meeting: Tuesday 16 January 2018

Location: One Drummond Gate, London

National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee

Minute

Tuesday, 10 October 2017
Board Room, Drummond Gate, London

Present Members

Mr Ian Cope (Chair)
Mr Keith Dugmore
Mr Colin Godbold
Ms Isabel Nisbet
Ms Marion Oswald
Mr Osama Rahman
Dr Emma Uprichard

UK Statistics Authority

Dr Simon Whitworth
Mr Petros Saravakos

Office for National Statistics

Mr David Johnson (for item 3)
Mr John Flatley (for item 4)
Ms Fiona Aitchinson (for item 4)
Mr Jon Wroth-Smith (for item 5)
Ms Becky Tinsley (for item 5)
Mr Neil Bannister (for item 7)
Mr Peter Stokes (for items 8 and 9)
Mr Owen Abbot (for item 10)

Ministry of Justice

Mr Steve Ellerd-Elliot (for item 6)

Apologies:

Professor Martin Severs
Mr Robert Bumpstead
Ms Vanessa Cuthill
Ms Annie Hitchman
Dr Brent Mittelstadt

1. Minutes and matters arising from the previous meeting

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed members to the tenth meeting of the National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee (NSDEC).
- 1.2. Members were informed that the minute of the ninth meeting had been agreed by correspondence. The minute, agenda and papers from the last meeting are now published on the [UK Statistics Authority website](#).
- 1.3. The Chair updated the meeting with progress on actions from previous meetings. Most actions were complete or in progress and would soon be complete.

2. Chair's report

2.1. The Chair welcomed three new members to the committee.

- i. Dr Emma Uprichard: Reader, Deputy Director, Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies, University of Warwick;
- ii. Dr Brent Mittelstadt: Postdoctoral Research Fellow in data ethics at the Oxford Internet Institute; and
- iii. Mr Stephen Balchin: Interim Head of Profession for Statistics at Department for Work and Pensions.

2.2. The Chair provided members with an update on projects previously considered by NSDEC. The meeting heard that:

- i. All the revisions to the proposal to estimate income from administrative data have been implemented. Estimates will be published as banded distributions at lower geographical levels.
- ii. Progress has been made in the project to measure the quality of, and further develop, a tool which estimates ethnicity from names. An update was offered to the committee and a revised application is expected at the next meeting.
- iii. Researchers involved in the proposal to use ONS data to examine the link between design skills and economic outcomes have clarified how design occupations and design industries will be defined.
- iv. All revisions to the proposal to enhance the evidence base on the impact of the heritage sector to the UK economy have been implemented. Researchers from the private research consultancy Ortus Economic Research have clarified the research outputs and how conservation officers are defined.
- v. Researchers from the private economic research consultancy Frontier Economics, who are conducting research to evaluate the impact of the apprentice pay policy in England have clarified how the Individual Learners Records will be used.

2.3. The meeting heard that the NSDEC secretariat had received positive feedback from members about the training day organised on 1 September 2017.

2.4. Members received an update on the research and statistics strands of the Digital Economy Act (DEA). It was reported that a consultation on the codes of practice was launched on 21 September and would run until 2 November 2017.

2.5. The meeting heard that the secretariat had participated in a series of workshops organised by the Government Digital Service (GDS) to provide feedback on the GDS Data Science Ethical Framework. This offered the opportunity to present the work of NSDEC. The secretariat also took part in a workshop with the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) to discuss the establishment of an expert Data Use and Ethics Commission to provide ethical advice to regulators and Parliament on the use of data and emerging data technologies.

2.6. NSDEC members were informed that the Nuffield foundation is working in partnership with the British Academy, the Royal Society, the Alan Turing Institute and the Royal Statistical Society in undertaking the necessary groundwork to launch an independent Convention on Data Ethics in 2018. The Convention would connect the work of data scientists and academics from other disciplines to public policy and to practitioners and decision-makers in the public and private sectors. The aim of this independent convening space, is to identify key issues, deliberate on how these might be addressed, and propose areas for research that would progress the debate.

3. Forward planning for managing future work

- 3.1. Dr Simon Whitworth and Mr David Johnson, from the Data Science Campus, presented early plans to develop a process of ethical self assessment based on the NSDEC principles which could be rolled out across the ONS research community. This self assessment will be used to decide what projects need to be scrutinised by the committee. It is proposed that the self assessments will be scrutinised by an ONS senior manager and the NSDEC secretariat to quality assure the self assessment and ensure that due process had been correctly followed. Researchers will receive training to enable to complete the self assessment.
- 3.2. Members were informed that this project is necessary to cope with the Committee's likely greater workload due to the expected increase in the number of projects following the implementation of the DEA. Initially, this work is taking place in collaboration with the ONS Data Science Campus who are supportive of the move towards the suggested process of self-assessment.
- 3.3. Members were supportive of the initiative but suggested that further work is required to accurately define the scoring system, the weightings and outline high risk areas. NSDEC asked for the secretariat to work with DSC to produce a detailed proposal for self assessment which will be considered at the next meeting.

Action: The Secretariat to work with the Data Science Campus to update the proposal based on the committee's feedback and present a detailed proposal for ethical consideration via self-assessment at the next meeting.

4. Ethical review of the Crime Survey for England and Wales[NSDEC(17)20]

- 4.1. Mr John Flatley presented a proposal from the ONS Crime Team to review the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), a well-established ONS survey conducted by a third party (Kantar Public) on behalf of ONS. This review was brought to the committee in light of a complaint raised by a member of the public about the lack of ethical consideration of some of the voluntary questions in the survey that asked about experience of sexual abuse during childhood.
- 4.2. Members agreed that asking these questions presented a clear public benefit in providing a realistic and accurate view of sexual abuse during childhood in England and Wales. However members noted that the survey does not capture crimes for age groups (16-17 years old) and does not capture cyber crime.
- 4.3. Members requested that Mr Flatley reviewed the guidance and training offered to interviewers to ensure that:
 - i. they comply with the ONS safeguarding policy;
 - ii. prepare interviewers to handle distressing situations;
 - iii. offer the respondents early warning of the sensitivity of the questions asked; and
 - iv. do not pressurise potential respondents into answering the question.
- 4.4. The meeting requested that Mr Flatley provided more detail on the data security arrangements and safeguards to limit the risk of re-identification appropriate to the sensitivity of the survey questions.
- 4.5. Members suggested further work to be done together with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) to refine the language used in the advance letter, supporting material and questionnaire.
- 4.6. This project received major revisions

Action: Mr John Flatley to work with NSPCC to:

- i. **update the supporting material and advance letter;**
- ii. **review the questions and scope of the survey with NSPCC;**
- iii. **provide assurances on the security and confidentiality of the data; and**
- iv. **resubmit a proposal at the next NSDEC meeting.**

5. Integrated Data Enabling Analysis and Statistics (IDEAS)

5.1. Mr Jon Wroth-Smith, from ONS Data as a Service Division, and Ms Becky Tinsley, from the ONS Administrative Data Census Division, presented on a data infrastructure project being developed by ONS to store separate de-identified datasets in such a way that they can be consistently and coherently joined together in a timely fashion.

5.2. Members heard that this project will improve the quality of the data linkage and will facilitate the production of more timely and responsive statistics without compromising on data security. Similar projects have been successfully implemented in Wales (SAIL databank) and New Zealand (Integrated Data Infrastructure).

5.3. Members were supportive of the project and thought that this project would enable a consistent approach to linkage to be applied across government and facilitate wider collaboration across government for research and statistics. Given the potential sensitivity of having a unique id number assigned to individual records, members recommended that further engagement is required to inform the public about this work.

6. Opening access to the Ministry of Justice data

6.1. Mr Steve Ellerd-Elliot, Chief Statistician and Deputy Director of Justice Statistics Analytical Services at the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), presented on the MoJ's approach to open data and transparency. The presentation focused on the new developments to safely and responsibly open up the data produced and held by MoJ to the public domain. This included the data security and ethical safeguards in place.

6.2. Mr Steve Ellerd-Elliot agreed to a closer collaboration between NSDEC and the MoJ. NSDEC will provide ethical consideration for projects using MoJ data for the production of statistics.

7. Linking prescription data to mortality data[NSDEC(17)21]

7.1. Mr Neil Bannister from the ONS Life Events team presented a proposal to conduct a feasibility study to provide an evidence base to investigate the relationship between suicide statistics and prescription drugs. This work will investigate the:

- i. extent of suicides related to prescription drugs in England; and
- ii. relationship between specific prescription drugs and suicides in England;

7.2. Members were satisfied that the application complied with the Data Protection Act but requested further legal advice about how proposal complied with the Statistics and Registration Services Act and the Human Rights Act. Members also requested the following:

- i. more clarity on the aims and expected outcomes of the research;
- ii. assurance about how the risk of re-identification of individuals known to researchers (e.g. public figures) will be mitigated; and
- iii. more information about the age groups and geographies covered in the application.

7.3. This project received major revisions

Action: Mr Neil Bannister to:

- i. **clarify in the application the research aims and outcomes;**
- ii. **clearly specify the age groups and geographies covered;**
- iii. **provide assurances on limiting the risk of re-identification by the researchers;**
- iv. **consult ONS Legal Services regarding compliance with the Human Rights Act and SRSA; and**
- v. **resubmit a proposal at the next NSDEC meeting.**

8. MRP Projects considered via correspondence [NSDEC(17)22]

- 8.1. Mr Pete Stokes presented the research proposal "A study of European citizens in the UK", which was an Approved Researcher project and had been approved with minor revisions via correspondence. Mr. Stokes thanked the committee for considering this application by correspondence.

9. MRP Projects considered via precedent [NSDEC(17)23]

- 9.1 Mr Pete Stokes presented the evidence that had been used to pass the eight projects by precedent since the NSDEC meeting in July. Members were satisfied with the decisions made and the evidence upon which the decisions were made. Members suggested that they should be provided with more detail in the future about the strength of the precedent used.

Action: The Secretariat to work with the ONS Researcher Support and Data Access team to decide on a classification of precedent decisions and present this to the next meeting.

10. Ethnicity from names

- 10.1. Mr Owen Abbott from ONS's Big Data Team provided an updated on the project proposal which looks to measure the quality of, and further develop, a tool, to estimate ethnicity from names. The project will be run in collaboration with University College London (UCL).
- 10.2. Members heard that the proposed tool will now produce aggregate outputs and include a disclosure control mechanism (differential privacy) based on advice by the ONS Statistical Disclosure Control team. Mr Abbott reassured the committee that the tool will provide information about the accuracy of the estimates produced and is currently more accurate than commercially available software.
- 10.3. Members were satisfied with the progress that has been made since they last discussed the project. Members suggested the following further work:
- i. a pilot using census data should be run within ONS to update the thresholds, taking into consideration age and ethnic groups; and
 - ii. further engagement with other population groups to provide them with the opportunity to feedback on the tool.

Action: Mr Owen Abbott to:

- i. **update threshold levels to mitigate the risk of re-identification;**
- ii. **liaise with other population groups to provide them with the opportunity to feedback on the tool; and**
- iii. **resubmit a proposal when this work has been completed.**

11. Any other business

- 11.1. There was no other business.

National Statistician’s Data Ethics Advisory Committee

Minute

Tuesday, 4 July 2017
Board Room, Drummond Gate, London

**Present
Members**

Mr Ian Cope (Chair)
Mr Robert Bumpstead
Ms Vanessa Cuthill
Mr Keith Dugmore
Mr Colin Godbold
Ms Annie Hitchman
Ms Isabel Nisbet
Ms Marion Oswald
Mr Osama Rahman

UK Statistics Authority
Dr Simon Whitworth

Office for National Statistics
Mr Peter Stokes (for items 3 and 11)
Ms Megan Elkin (for item 4)
Mr Owen Abbott (for items 5 and 6)
Mr Matthew Greenaway (for item 6)

Durham Constabulary
Ms Sheena Urwin (for item 8)

Apologies:
Professor Martin Severs
Mr Neil McIvor

1.

Minutes and matters arising from the previous meeting
- 1.1

The Chair welcomed members to the ninth meeting of the National Statistician’s Data Ethics Advisory Committee (NSDEC).
- 1.2

Members were informed that the minute of the eighth meeting had been agreed by correspondence. The minute, agenda and papers from the last meeting are now published on the [UK Statistics Authority website](#).
- 1.3

The Chair updated the meeting with progress on actions from previous meetings. Most actions were complete or in progress and would soon be complete.

2. Chair's report

2.1 The Chair provided members with an update on projects previously considered by NSDEC. The meeting heard that:

- i. All of the revisions to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) proposal to examine the veterans of the Armed Forces and their households have been implemented. ONS has now got the MoD data and the linkage is taking place.
- ii. All of the revisions to the proposal to assess the representativeness of the Labour Force Survey using admin data have been implemented. Both DWP and HMRC have agreed for the project to proceed. Linkage has successfully been completed and the analysis is being undertaken.
- iii. The researchers involved in the proposal to use ONS data to understand Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in UK have confirmed that the research will focus on firms and not individuals.
- iv. Researchers from the independent research and policy consultancy Belmana who are researching the performance of businesses that have received support from Innovate UK have implemented all revisions.

2.2 Following the July 2016 NSDEC meeting, a new ONS safeguarding policy and procedure has been developed. It was reported that the policy was successfully piloted, between January and May 2017. Plans are now being developed to roll out the policy to the all interviewers by the end of 2017 and the final policy will be published on the ONS website.

2.3 The meeting heard that the NSDEC application form has been redesigned to make it easier for applicants to fill in the form, limit repetition and ensure that NSDEC have all required information to consider the ethical aspects of research proposals.

2.4 It was reported that Dr Brent Mittelstadt, a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Oxford Internet Institute with expertise in the ethics of algorithms, machine learning, artificial intelligence and data analytics ('Big Data'), had been appointed to NSDEC and will attend the October meeting.

2.5 The meeting heard that the Secretariat had met with the Cabinet Office Communications team to provide advice on their development of an ethical framework on the access, use and sharing of data in their communication campaigns. The secretariat has also met with the Department for International Development as they are establishing an internal ethics committee for DfID staff for evaluation and research projects.

2.6 The Chair reported that the Digital Economy Bill received Royal Assent on 27 April 2017 and is now an Act of Parliament. It was reported that there would be a public consultation on the statement of principles/codes of practice over the summer and that the government would respond to the responses to the consultation in early autumn. An additional process of parliamentary scrutiny, under the affirmative resolution procedure, will take place on the principles/codes of practice before full commencement at the end of the year.

2.7 NSDEC members were informed that the British Academy and Royal Society had recently published a report on Data Management and use: Governance in the 21st Century. This recommends a set of high level principles are required to shape all forms of data governance to ensure trustworthiness and trust in the management of data. The report also recommends that a new body is set up to steward the landscape as a whole and that NSDEC is mentioned as one of the existing governance groups that the new body should draw upon when developing its principles.

2.8 It was reported that Professor Dame Wendy Hall (Southampton University) and Jerome Pesenti (CEO of Benevolent Tech) are to lead a review on how to capitalise on the UK's status as a world leader in the science underpinning Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology. The review is supported by Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy and Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, and will consider how Government and industry could work together to better support this technology and further grow the sector, from early research to commercialisation.

3. Reviewing Microdata Release Projects (MRP) by precedent [NSDEC(17)13]

3.1 The Chair informed the meeting that consideration of some proposals via precedent may be necessary in order to ensure timely access to ONS data for Approved Researchers from the commercial sector. A proposed process to do this was presented to NSDEC. This involved projects being agreed by precedent by the Chair based on the advice of the Secretariat and the Head of ONS Researcher Support and Data Access team.

3.2 Members had the following comments on the proposal:

- i. It should be clear who the researcher is and who the sponsor is. A full assessment of their suitability should be conducted. This step should be added to the flow chart.
- ii. When operationalising the precedent process consideration could be given to the categories of sensitive data in the Data Protection Act.
- iii. The evidence on which the decision to approve a project by precedence is based upon needs to be clear. It was reported that the MRP application form would be altered to be more consistent with the NSDEC application form.
- iv. A record of the commercial organisations that have previously accessed data should be maintained and this previous use should be taken into consideration when taking decisions by precedent.
- v. There should be a reference to the ethical principles in the flow chart.

3.3 NSDEC agreed to approve the proposed process of approving MRP projects from the commercial sector by precedent. All projects approved by precedent would be reported to future NSDEC meetings.

Action: The Secretariat to work with the ONS Researcher Support and Data Access team to approve projects by precedent and report these projects at the next NSDEC meeting.

4. CTP: Estimating Income from administrative [NSDEC(17)14]

4.1 Ms Meghan Elkin presented a proposal from the ONS Census Transformation Programme to use administrative data from Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) to develop a methodology to produce estimates at Middle and Lower Super Output Area level. It was made clear to NSDEC that the estimates will be published as banded distributions at these geographic levels.

4.2 Members were informed that this project would add real value for users because it will enable multivariate analysis at these geographic levels. Ms Elkin provided assurance to the committee that the statistical disclosure control will be applied to reduce the chances of re-identification when multivariate analysis is conducted.

4.3 NSDEC approved this project subject to minor revisions.

Action: Ms Elkin to make it clear in the application that estimates will be published as banded distributions at lower geographical levels.

5. Revised: Estimating ethnicity from names [NSDEC(17)15]

- 5.1 Mr Owen Abbott from ONS's Big Data Team introduced a re-submitted project proposal which looks to measure the quality of, and further develop, a tool, to estimate ethnicity from names. The project will be run in collaboration with University College London (UCL).
- 5.2 It was stated that significant improvements had been made in this application. However, members thought that use of this tool should be restricted to aggregate data and that the release of this aggregate data should be subject to ONS's normal statistical disclosure rules.
- 5.3 Members wanted to be provided with external assurance that people cannot hack the tool remotely. If this assurance cannot be provided then the tool should only be used by ONS and the disclosure controlled aggregate data distributed to users by ONS. ONS should also speak to other population groups to provide them with the opportunity to feedback on the tool and as a further chance to raise any concerns they might have.
- 5.4 NSDEC recommended major revisions to the proposal and requested that it be resubmitted to a future meeting once these revisions had been implemented. A task and finish group should be set up to investigate the feasibility of implementing these revisions and to ensure that this works happens quickly.

Action: Mr Abbott to set up a task and finish group to do the following:

- i. **make sure the use of the tool is restricted to aggregate data which is subject to ONS's statistical disclosure rules;**
- ii. **provide NSDEC with external assurance that people cannot hack the tool remotely;**
- iii. **speak to other population groups to provide them with the opportunity to feedback on the tool and as a further chance to raise any concerns they might have; and**
- iv. **resubmit a proposal when this work has been completed.**

6. Web scraping policy [NSDEC(17)16]

- 6.1 Mr Matthew Greenaway presented a policy on web-scraping guidance for ONS staff. A first draft of this policy was seen at the meeting of NSDEC on 24 January 2017. It was reported that following the last visit to NSDEC a task and finish group on web-scraping was established to further develop the ONS draft guidance on web scraping and oversee the production of comprehensive guidance that clearly presents good practice in web scraping for use by ONS staff in the production of statistics and research that serve the public good.
- 6.3 It was clarified that web scraping would cease if the web site owner asked ONS to stop web scraping and that ONS would not be using their powers under the Digital Economy Act to web scrape.
- 6.4 Members agreed that any project involving web scraping personal data will need to be approved by the committee before commencement.
- 6.5 NSDEC approved this proposal and complemented the task and finish group on their work taking this forward.

Action: Mr Greenaway to amend the policy to make it clear that web scraping would cease if the web site owner asked ONS to stop web scraping and submit any proposal to web scrape personal data to NSDEC for ethical consideration.

7. NSDEC self-assessment

- 7.1 Dr Simon Whitworth presented this item. The aim of the self assessment was to understand what NSDEC members felt had worked well over the course of the last year and what could be improved upon in the future.
- 7.2 It was reported that NSDEC members had provided positive feedback about the chairing and membership of the committee. However some members wanted more representation from areas such as computer science and the voluntary sector. Dr Whitworth reported that this feedback was being taken into consideration in the recruitment of new NSDEC members.
- 7.3 It was felt that the new application form was an improvement on the previous form. However, there was still scope to reduce the amount of paperwork that was being sent to members.
- 7.4 Dr Whitworth reported that training covering some of the common themes that NSDEC are regularly discussing in meetings would be provided in prior to the next meeting in October.

Action: Dr Whitworth to organise the training for NSDEC members before the next meeting.

8. Algorithmic Policing

- 8.1 Ms Sheena Urwin, Head of Criminal Justice at Durham Constabulary, and Ms Marion Oswald presented on Algorithmic risk assessment policing in Durham Constabulary custody suites. The presentation focused on the development of a decision support tool to provide consistent and transparent decision support to encourage offenders away from a life of crime and improve their life chances.
- 8.2 The legal and ethical framework which had been developed to guide the deployment of algorithmic assessment tools in the policing context was also discussed.

9. MRP: Design skills for innovation and productivity [NSDEC(17)17]

- 9.1 Mr Stokes, Head of ONS Researcher Support and Data Access team, introduced a proposal via the Approved Researcher Scheme by Ortus Economic Research Ltd, a private research consultancy, to use ONS survey data in the Virtual Microdata Laboratory (VML) to enhance the evidence base on design skills and their links to economic outcomes.
- 9.2 Mr Stokes was asked to provide more information on how design occupations and design industries will be defined.
- 9.3 The committee approved this project subject to minor revisions.

Action: Mr Stokes to clarify in the application how design occupations and design industries will be defined.

10. MRP: Heritage Economic Impact [NSDEC(17)18]

- 10.1 Mr Stokes presented a proposal referred by the Microdata Release Panel for access and use of ONS data by Ortus Economic Research Ltd, a private research consultancy, to enhance the evidence base on the impact of the heritage sector to the UK economy.
- 10.2 It was suggested that more information should be provided on how a conservation officer is defined and that section B7 of the application should be improved to provide more clarity on the outputs.

10.3 NSDEC approved this project subject to minor revisions.

Action: Mr Stokes to clarify in the application how a conservation officer is defined and provide more clarity on the outputs in section B7.

11. MRP: Impact evaluation of the Apprentice rate increase [NSDEC(17)19]

11.1 Mr Stokes presented a proposal referred by the Microdata Release Panel for access and use of ONS data by Frontier economics, a private economic research consultancy, to evaluate the impact of the apprentice pay policy in England.

11.2 It was suggested that greater clarity should be provided on the proposed use of Individual Learners Records in the research.

11.3 NSDEC approved this project subject to minor revisions.

Action: Mr Stokes to clarify in the application how Individual Learners Records will be used.

12. Any other business

12.1 The secretariat will send out the meetings dates for next year.

12.2 The secretariat to include in future NSDEC updates some of the main themes discussed during relevant data ethics conferences and events.

1. Minutes	2. Chair's	3. Ethical	4. IDEAS	5. MoJ	6. Prescriptio	7. Guardian	8. Precedent	9. Ethnicity	10 AOB
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Chair's report
Mr Ian Cope

1. Minutes	2. Chair's	3. Ethical	4. IDEAS	5. MoJ	6. Prescriptio	7. Guardian	8. Precedent	9. Ethnicity	10 AOB
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1. Minutes	2. Chairs	3. Ethical	4. IDEAS	5. MoJ	6. Prescriptio	7. Guardian	8. Precedent	9. Ethnicity	10 AOB
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Forward planning of future work strands

Oral report

Simon Whitworth and David Johnson

1. Minutes	2. Chairs	3. Ethical	4. IDEAS	5. MoJ	6. Prescriptio	7. Guardian	8. Precedent	9. Ethnicity	10 AOB
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1. Minutes
2. Chair's
3. Ethical
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UK Statistics Authority

National Statistician’s Data Ethics Advisory Committee

NSDEC(17)20

Ethical review of the Crime Survey for England and Wales

This project is undergoing major revisions and will be published in due course

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IDEAS - Integrated Data Enabling Analysis and Statistics

Oral report

Jon Wroth-Smith and Becky Tinsley

1. Minutes	2. Chairs	3. Ethical	4. IDEAS	5. MoJ	6. Prescriptio	7. Guardian	8. Precedent	9. Ethnicity	10 AOB
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MoJ – Open Data and Transparency

Oral presentation

Steve Ellerd-Elliott

1. Minutes	2. Chairs	3. Ethical	4. IDEAS	5. MoJ	6. Prescriptio	7. Guardian	8. Precedent	9. Ethnicity	10 AOB
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UK Statistics Authority
National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee

NSDEC(17)21

Linking prescription data to mortality data

This project is undergoing major revisions and will be published in due course

1. Minutes
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4. IDEAS
5. MoJ
6. Prescripti
7. Guardian
8. Precedent
9. Ethnicity
10 AOB

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UK Statistics Authority

National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee

NSDEC(17)22

Microdata Release Panel: A study of European citizens in the UK

Purpose

1. This paper presents a proposal referred to NSDEC by the Microdata Release Panel for use of ONS data by The Guardian, a daily newspaper, to seek to describe the overall characteristics of European citizens living in the UK in terms of their societal attributes and contributions to the UK economy. This proposal was approved by NSDEC via correspondence and is presented here to formalise member's deliberations via correspondence.
2. Members of NSDEC are presented with the project application at **Annex A** and the summary of the discussion that took place via correspondence at **Annex B** for reference.

Background

3. The Microdata Release Panel (MRP) governs access to the secure ONS Virtual Microdata Laboratory, and provides approved researchers access to de-identified ONS data in order to undertake approved projects.
4. In 2016, following a public consultation of the Approved Researcher process, it was agreed that, where it thought necessary, the MRP would refer applications from the commercial sector to use ONS data via the approved researcher gateway to NSDEC for ethical review.
5. In the NSDEC meeting on 24 January 2017, the Committee were informed that some of these proposals would need to be considered via correspondence in order to ensure equality in timeliness of access to ONS data.
6. In the discussion that followed, members agreed that:
 - i. it would be most appropriate for all members to be sent the application for review;
 - ii. a sufficient number of members would need to respond to meet the requirements for a quorate meeting for any proposal being considered by correspondence to be formally approved; and
 - iii. where expedited review is sought and NSDEC approve the proposal, the application and summary of member's comments will be published as part of NSDEC's next meeting.
7. The research will seek to describe the overall characteristics of European citizens living in the UK in terms of their societal attributes (e.g. country of origin, household structure, employment, education and skills) and contributions to the UK economy. The research will examine several variables from de-identified ONS Annual Population Survey (APS) data as well as published aggregate data from the 2011 Census and ONS analysis on international immigration and the UK Labour Market 2016. The APS data will be accessed in the ONS Secure Research Setting (formerly known as the VML) to ensure that the confidentiality of data subjects is protected. The Guardian researcher is an ONS Accredited Researcher under the Approved Researcher scheme.

8. The project advocates a clear public benefit to produce an evidence-based picture of European citizens living in the UK and thus better inform the public and policy makers about the aggregated characteristics of European nationals and how and where they live. This could be of particular value for regional public authorities in planning allocation of funding for education, health services and transport and could enable groups to better tailor their services and activities more effectively to meet the needs of citizens. It will also inform policy decisions, particularly in discussions about the status and future of the European citizens in the UK in the wake of the UK's decision to exit the European Union. Its publication would in turn inform the public and improve knowledge and understanding about European citizens living in the country. This will inform democratic debate – a central tenet of the UK Statistics Authority's Better Statistics, Better Decisions strategy.
9. The research methodology and outcomes will be made public and reported on as an online article on the Guardian website. All outcomes will be cleared by ONS to ensure that there is no risk to disclosure of data subjects and their confidentiality is protected.

Simon Whitworth, NSDEC Secretariat, Central Policy Secretariat, UK Statistics Authority, 2 October 2017

List of Annexes

Annex A: Application: A study of European citizens in the UK.

Annex B: Minutes of correspondence with regards to the application, 23 August 2017

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Annex A Application: A study of European citizens in the UK.

National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee

Application for Ethical Review

Please consult the [guidance document](#) before filling in the application form

Project Title

Please provide a title indicative of the project

A study of European citizens living in the UK

Start Date: 21 August 17

End Date: 31-October-17

Project Sponsor(s)

Please list the project sponsor(s)

The Guardian

Project Summary

*Please provide a brief high level summary of the research giving necessary background
(max 250 words)*

The aims of the research are to:

- Provide an unbiased data-based analysis of European citizens living in different regions of the UK;
- Better inform the public on the characteristics and contribution to the economy, of the European citizens living in the UK;
- Consider the potential impact of immigration policy and decisions as Brexit negotiations evolve for the UK's exit from the European Union.

The research will seek to describe the overall characteristics of European citizens living in the UK in terms of their societal attributes (e.g. country of origin, household structure, employment, education and skills) and contributions to the UK economy. The research will examine several variables from de-identified ONS Annual Population Survey (APS) data as well as published aggregate data from the 2011 Census and ONS analysis on [international immigration and the UK Labour Market 2016](#). The APS data will be accessed

in the ONS Secure Research Setting (formerly known as the VML) to ensure that the confidentiality of data subjects is protected. The Guardian researcher is an ONS Accredited Researcher under the Approved Researcher scheme.

The research will provide greater insight into European citizens living in different regions of the UK to provide an evidence base to help national, regional and local service providers and policy makers better understand the characteristics and specific needs of their communities and in turn help them to make more informed decisions about the allocation of funding, and provision of public services and activities in areas such as, but not limited to, education, housing, transport, health services, business services, adult and social care. It will also help public service providers tailor their activities to better meet the needs of the communities, e.g. provision of literature and information about services in different languages.

Interest in European citizens and migration is considerable, particularly since the EU Referendum and the UK's decision to exit the EU. Given the lack of data around the characteristics of European citizens in the UK, the research outcomes will undoubtedly inform debate about the lives and activities of these citizens. The Guardian has reported extensively on the lives of European citizens in the UK following the EU Referendum. The Guardian's journalism on the rights of European citizens and their treatment regarding their potential immigration status has been of considerable public interest. Guardian articles on this topic generate considerable interest (online readership) and debate among readers.

The research findings will be published on The Guardian website and promoted to relevant public authority organisations.

This will contribute to a balanced debate and help politicians and public servants develop well informed policy decisions. A wider evidence base would support more informed public debate on the potential impact of policy decisions taken as the Brexit negotiations develop. This in turn would be complemented with reporting from Guardian journalists to give the most rounded and accurate picture of Europeans living in the country.

The Guardian's reporting has helped inform the debate surrounding decisions taken with regards individual European's immigration status. In a number of cases the Guardian's reporting on anecdotal cases has encouraged public bodies to review and reverse their decisions with regards the rights of European citizens. However at present the public, policy makers, politicians and reporters are lacking the necessary data to understand the potential scale of impact of any decisions with regards the immigration rights of European and British citizens, particularly in cases where families are involved.

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Section A Project Details

A1 Legal gateways

Please provide the assessment of the legal gateways of the project as provided by Legal Services

The ONS Approved Researcher scheme is the legal gateway being used to access the data. This is in compliance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007.

The ONS Microdata Release Panel (MRP) approved the proposal at its meeting on 6 March 2017 on the grounds that there was a legal gateway to access the data, it was appropriate use of ONS data and a public benefit was demonstrated.

A2 Ethical approval

Has the project being reviewed or is it expected to be reviewed by another ethics committee?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes please provide the name of the committee, the outcome and the date approved

A3 Proposed site of research select all that apply

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ONS | <input type="checkbox"/> ADRC - England |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> VML | <input type="checkbox"/> ADRC - Scotland |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HMRC Data Lab | <input type="checkbox"/> ADRC - Northern Ireland |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> ADRC - Wales |

please specify

A4 Data subjects to be studied

Does the study include all subsections of the population
(i.e. all ages, sex, ethnic groups etc?)

☐ Yes ☒ No

If no please detail which subsections with justification(s) below:

Subsections of the population (including vulnerable groups) the project focuses on:

The research scope will focus only on EU nationals living in the UK who have responded to the Annual Population Survey. Aggregate data on the characteristics of European citizens and the areas and households where they live, from the 2011 Census and ONS analysis on [International Immigration and the labour market, UK 2016](#) will also be used. Dependents of EU citizens (i.e. children) will be counted, but not analysed. For instance, the researcher is interested that an EU citizen has two dependents, but will not look at, or analyse, the characteristics of them.

Justification for focusing on these subsections or groups:

Based on the research scope; the analysis only focuses on EU citizens living in the UK.

A5 Please provide details of the research protocol or methodology (e.g. data linkage, web scraping etc) (max 500 words)

The study will use de-identified data from the Annual Population Survey (APS) to produce aggregate statistics at a specific geographical level (local authority or regional level). Depending on the sample size from the APS and to limit the risk of re-identification following statistical disclosure controls, the researcher may analyse the data at a regional level instead of the local authority level initially proposed.

The project will be separated into two phases:

- 1 The first phase will focus on the analysing the societal characteristics of EU migrants living in the UK. The data will be analysed to produce aggregate statistics per region focusing on the following variable groups:
 - 1.1 Nationality and country of origin of subjects and partners
 - 1.2 Time in the UK
 - 1.3 Household structure, including number of dependents
 - 1.4 Region and local authority
 - 1.5 Education and skills
 - 1.6 Employment / unemployment
 - 1.7 Income (banded levels of income)

All of the above variables will be used to improve understanding of the status of EU migrants, inform the impact assessment of policy decisions (e.g. as Brexit negotiations develop), and increase awareness and provide evidence on the current and future

needs in the provision of services by public authorities. The researcher will work with de-identified data within the Secure Research Service (SRS) and statistical disclosure controls will be applied to mitigate any intentional or unintentional disclosure of identity of the data subjects. Income levels will be banded to avoid disclosing sensitive financial information and only averages will be presented per region.

Findings of the data analysis will be shared with and cleared by ONS to ensure they are not disclosive.

- 2 The findings of the data analysis may also serve as the basis for a series of data visualisations to accompany the articles or as a standalone interactive article. These visualisations will be checked for publication by the ONS statistical support team.

The data analysis using de-identified ONS APS and published 2011 Census statistics will give as a full picture as possible of the lives of EU migrants in the UK. The final articles will be shared with ONS for comment before they are approved. The Guardian will ensure that the articles do not result in stereotyping of EU migrants.

This will contribute to a balanced debate and help politicians and public servants develop well informed policy decisions. A wider evidence base would support more informed public debate on the potential impact of policy decisions taken as the Brexit negotiations develop. This in turn would be complemented with reporting from Guardian journalists to give the most rounded and accurate picture of Europeans living in the country.

The Guardian's reporting has helped inform the debate surrounding decisions taken with regards individual European's immigration status. In a number of cases the Guardian's reporting on anecdotal cases has encouraged public bodies to review and reverse their decisions with regards the rights of European citizens. However at present the public, policy makers, politicians and reporters are lacking the necessary data to understand the potential scale of impact of any decisions with regards the immigration rights of European and British citizens, particularly in cases where families are involved.

A6
Data use

 Please specify the data used **by the research team** including any timeframes e.g. *LFS data 2014-15*

Type of data	Data Level			
	Please specify the name of the data set			
	Aggregate Data	Identifiable Data	De-identified personal data	Anonymised/pseudo anonymised
Administrative data (please specify, e.g. Patient Register 2011, School Census 2012 etc, in the relevant options adjacent)				
Big Data (please specify e.g. Twitter data, smart meters and mobile phones, in the relevant options adjacent)				
Survey Data (please specify e.g. LFS, BRES, etc in the relevant options adjacent)			Annual Population Survey 2015-16 (SRS version)	
Census Data (please specify year, e.g. Census 2011 in the relevant options adjacent)	2011 Census ONS Analytical article, UK International Immigration and the labour market, UK 2016			
Other (please specify e.g. Ordnance Survey Address register in the relevant options adjacent)				

Section B

Assessment against NSDEC ethical principles

B1

Principle 1: The use of data has clear benefits for users and serves the public good.

Please outline the proposed benefits of the project (max 500 words)

The purpose of this project is to produce a comprehensive picture of the types of European citizens living in different parts of the UK and, due to its publication in a major daily newspaper and online, will reach a very wide audience.

The research will be used:

- As an evidence-based picture of European citizens living in the UK and thus better inform the public and policy makers about the aggregated characteristics of European nationals, and how they live, when considering public policy. This could be of particular use for regional public authorities in planning allocation of funding for education, health services, transport and could enable groups to better tailor their services and activities more effectively to meet the needs of citizens.
- To provide an evidence base to inform policy decisions, particularly in discussions about the status and future of European citizens in the UK in the wake of the UK's decision to exit the European Union. The result of these policy decisions will undoubtedly have a huge impact on the economy, society and quality of life in the UK.
- To provide evidence-based approach to discussions around European citizens in the UK. Its publication would in turn inform the public and improve knowledge and understanding about European citizens living in the country. This will inform democratic debate – a central tenet of the UK Statistics Authority's Better Statistics, Better Decisions strategy.

Previous examples of work carried out by the researcher and published in The Guardian, include an analysis of the [proposed maximum wage cap](#); an analysis of the [demographics of the EU referendum results](#); an examination of the shift of [political support away from mainstream parties across the EU](#). All the articles have served to better inform debate of economic, social and political issues. In some cases anecdotal Guardian reporting on immigration issues affecting EU citizens, EU nationals married to UK citizens and the children of families made up of EU and British nationals, whose immigration status is unclear has [encouraged public bodies to review and reverse their decisions](#) concerning individuals' immigration status. Currently public bodies, the public, politicians and reporters don't have sufficient detail to know how many other people could be affected by similar decisions in this area. The data-based evidence that would result from this project could help better inform current policy decisions and those that will undoubtedly develop in the coming years of Brexit negotiations.

B2 Please outline any intended future use for products (such as linked data sets or tools) produced as a result of the research and how they will be accessed. (max 250 words)

None.

B3 **Principle 2: The data subject's identity (whether person or organisation) is protected, information is kept confidential and secure, and the issue of consent is considered appropriately.**

Please outline how data security, confidentiality and informed consent is safeguarded in this project (max 500 words)

Access to data will only take place within the secure ONS Secure Research Setting (SRS) – (formerly the Virtual Microdata Laboratory, VML) environment and all outputs will be checked by ONS prior to release to ensure disclosure control and the confidentiality of data subjects is protected. All analysis and use of the data will be within the SRS at one of the ONS offices. The researcher is accredited under the ONS Approved Researcher scheme. No data or report drafts will be seen by anyone else in The Guardian and ONS will have sight of the report before it is published.

It should also be noted that it will be made explicit in the reporting, for the avoidance of any doubt, that:

- The data supplied and analysed was de-identified;
- No individuals have been identified in the reporting;
- No attempts to identify individuals have been made in analysing the data or in the process of reporting out the findings of the data.

It should also be noted that ONS will have sight of the final report prior to publication.

B4 **Principle 3: The risks and limits of new technologies are considered and there is sufficient human oversight so that methods employed are consistent with recognised standards of integrity and quality.**

Please describe how the any risks from new technologies are been mitigated as well as any quality assurance activities in the project (max 500 words)

No new technologies are being used. The research methods employed will be openly available for further scrutiny or replication of results.

B5

Principle 4: Data used and methods employed are consistent with legal requirements such as the Data Protection Act, the Human Rights Act, the Statistics and Registration Service Act and the common law duty of confidence

Please describe the legal frameworks pertinent to this project (max 500 words)

Access to the potentially disclosive data will be in the SRS safe setting and via an approved legal gateway (Approved Researcher scheme). This is in compliance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007. The methods used are compliant with the principles in the Data Protection Act.

B6

Collaboration and Sponsors

Please describe the project sponsors and the **legal gateways** to acquire, process use and share their data

List of Collaborators/Sponsors	Details and relevant documentation relating to collaboration (you may attach copies of relevant documentation)
The Guardian	Sponsor

B7

Principle 5: The views of the public are considered in light of the data used and the perceived benefits of the research

Please list any public engagement activities (max 250 words)

Whilst the views of the public have not been sought with regards to the research, there is a clear public benefit for the analysis (as described in B1 above). It is also clear from an analysis of data on similar Guardian articles, that there is a great public interest in issues surrounding the rights of European and UK citizens following the EU referendum. An increased amount of data will help inform the public and policy makers about the potential impact of proposed policy changes as the Brexit negotiations evolve. The views of members of the public will also supplement the analysis and provide additional context. This is common practice for Guardian (and other media outlet) articles using published ONS data. A public consultation on the Approved Researcher scheme in 2015/16 recommended that commercial organisations should be allowed to access ONS research data where there is a clear public benefit.

B8
Principle 6: The access, use and sharing of data is transparent, and is communicated clearly and accessibly to the public
How will the findings of the research be disseminated? (max 500 words)

The research methodology and outcomes will be made public and reported on the Guardian website. Access to the summary of the analysis will be freely available. The Guardian article will make clear that the data was de-identified and The Guardian researcher did not have access to identified data about individuals and that this data was not used to identify individuals in the data. It will make clear that the final report was checked and cleared by ONS to ensure there was no risk of identification of data subjects and their confidentiality was protected, and that there is no biased interpretation or unethical reporting of the research findings.

To help promote greater transparency and in compliance with the updated Approved Researcher scheme, the researcher has agreed to their details being included on a public record of Approved Researchers and to publishing a link to the findings of their research on the ONS website (on the ONS Approved Researcher pages). ONS will work with the researcher to include the analysis as a published case study on the ONS website setting out the research methodology and outcomes, and their impact on public service delivery and decision/policy making. ONS has liaised with the researcher to highlight similar analysis published by ONS and we will collaborate with the researcher to explore whether their research findings might inform and contribute to existing and future (published) ONS analysis and outputs.

Section C

Responsible owner and applicant details

C1 Responsible Owner

Full Name: [REDACTED]

Position: [REDACTED]

Address:

[REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Organisation: [REDACTED]

Declaration to be signed by the responsible owner

I have met with and advised the applicant on the ethical aspects of this project design (applicable only if the responsible owner is not the Applicant).

I understand that it is a requirement for all researchers accessing the data to have undergone relevant training and to have either relevant security clearances or approved researcher status in order to access the data.

I am satisfied that the research complies with current professional, departmental and other relevant guidelines.

I will ensure that changes in approved research protocols are reported promptly and are not initiated without approval by the National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee.

I will provide notification when the study is complete if it or fails to start or is abandoned.

I will ensure that all adverse or unforeseen problems arising from the research are reported in a timely fashion to the National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee.

I will consider all advice received from the National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee and should I be unable to implement any of the recommendations made, I will provide reasoning in writing to the Committee.

Signature: [REDACTED]

Date: 23 June 2017

C2

Applicant Details (if applicant is not the responsible owner)

Full Name: [REDACTED]

Position: [REDACTED]

Address:

[REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Organisation: [REDACTED]

Annex B: Minutes of correspondence with regards to the application, 23 August 2017

Minutes of Correspondence 14/08/2017

Participating Members

Mr Ian Cope (Chair)
Mr Rob Bumpstead
Ms Annie Hitchman
Ms Marion Oswald
Ms Vanessa Cuthill
Mr Colin Godbold
Mr Keith Dugmore

UK Statistics Authority

Mr Petros Saravakos

Office for National Statistics

Mr Pete Stokes (Microdata Release Panel)

Apologies:

Dr Dean Machin
Mr Osama Rahman
Mr Neil McIvor
Ms Isabel Nisbet
Professor Martin Severs

1. Public good and user benefit

- 1.1. Members agreed that the proposed research has a clear public benefit. A member expressed concern about whether the research will be impacted by biases and how the relatively low daily print distribution of the newspaper would foster wider discussion.
- 1.2. Members were informed that the findings of the analysis will be published on the online Guardian website which is freely available and has considerable reach and readership. Most analytical articles attract a considerable number of comments. The study will report on evidence-based information and be totally impartial. ONS will also include a link to the published findings from the Guardian website and publish a case study summarising the findings.
- 1.3. Although it is clear how this research will inform the public, it is not clear how the research is going to be used by public authorities. This would only be realised if the data analysis was shared with public bodies. The researchers clarified that the relevant public bodies (e.g. Home Office, Department for Exiting the EU) will be made aware of the research findings to inform their policy and decision making.

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2. Data, methods, confidentiality and security

- 2.1. Members were unsure how second and third generation citizens will be identified. Researchers agreed that the application will be amended to reflect that the analysis will not include second and third generation citizens.
- 2.2. Members agreed that the second phase of the project, involving journalists conducting interviews, should not be included in the research project application. Further information is required on the second phase of the project. It is not clear how the interviewees will be approached since researchers would not be able to identify data subjects. Clarity is required on how potential interviewees will be identified. It has to be made clear in the application and the article that ONS will not provide contact details for those sampled.
- 2.3. Mr Stokes informed members that the second phase will be removed from the application as this does not use ONS research data. It will be made clear in the final article and report that interviewees were selected at random and were not chosen from the data analysed. It will also be made clear that all ONS research data accessed was de-identified and ONS did not provide any contact details.
- 2.4. Members were not sure whether the use of the Annual Population Survey would provide a comprehensive picture of all EU citizens. Mr Pete Stokes responded on behalf of the researcher stating that the Annual Population Survey provides comprehensive details on societal characteristics of EU citizens living in the UK such as nationality and country of origin, time in the UK, household structure, employment (inc. unemployment) education and skills. The analysis will be supplemented by aggregate data from the 2011 Census.
- 2.5. Assurances should be given that the research will only focus on adults and their households (number of dependents). Additional safeguards would be required if data about minors or interviews with minors are included. Members heard that the research will only focus on adults. Dependents of EU citizens (i.e. children) will be counted, but not analysed. For instance, researchers will be interested to know that an EU citizen has two dependents, but will not look at, or analyse, the characteristics of them. No dependents will be selected for interview.

3. Transparency in the use of data

- 3.1. The proposal needs to clarify the outcomes of the research, final report, summary analysis and articles. It was also recommended that data tables should be made publicly available at the same time as the first article is published. Mr Pete Stokes clarified that research findings will be presented as an online evidence-based picture of European citizens living in the UK. This will include ONS-cleared charts and graphs to present the findings. More detailed findings and analysis, including data tables, charts and graphs, will also be published. The findings will be shared with relevant public organisations to help inform policy and decision making, and democratic debate.

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3.2. Members recommended that ONS should not offer observations on the derived articles, should not assess the quality and objectivity (or otherwise) of the Guardian's journalism and should not endorse the articles even implicitly. Sufficient oversight is required to ensure only the quality of the data analysis.

3.3. Mr Pete Stokes reassured the members that ONS will check and clear all outputs, including charts and graphs, to ensure that the confidentiality of data subjects is protected, and that the use of the data is ethical. The researcher will collaborate with ONS to share findings, but ONS will not have influence over the quality and objectivity of the reporting and interpretations presented. It will be made clear that these are the views of the journalist.

4. Other

4.1. Members requested further information on whether the researcher is accredited and more clarity on the roles of the research team and the project sponsor. Mr Pete Stokes informed committee members that the researcher has been accredited via the ONS Approved Researcher Scheme and this is the legal gateway used to request access to the data. The researcher is employed by the Guardian who is the sponsor of this research proposal.

Petros Saravakos, NSDEC Secretariat, Central Policy Secretariat, UK Statistics Authority, 23 August 2017

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UK Statistics Authority

National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory Committee

NSDEC(17)23

Microdata Release Panel: Various research projects considered by precedence

Purpose

1. The papers at **Annex A** present the comparisons used to allow the Chair of NSDEC to decide whether to approve proposals, referred to NSDEC by the Microdata Release Panel (MRP), via precedent. The Chair's decisions for each proposal are noted in **Annex A**.

Recommendations

2. Members of NSDEC are invited to note the precedent comparisons at **Annex A** and the decisions of the Chair and provide any feedback on the process.

Background

3. The MRP governs access to the secure ONS Virtual Microdata Laboratory, and provides approved researchers access to de-identified ONS data in order to undertake approved projects.
4. In 2016, following a public consultation of the Approved Researcher process, it was agreed that the MRP would refer applications from the commercial sector, to use ONS data via the approved researcher process, to NSDEC for ethical review.
5. To manage the workload of NSDEC and to provide approved researchers with appropriate timely access to data, NSDEC agreed to allow the Chair to approve proposals where similar proposals had been approved previously. This decision was taken in the NSDEC meeting in July 2017.
6. All decisions taken by precedence and the information on which the decision was based will be shared with NSDEC and published.

Simon Whitworth, NSDEC Secretariat, Central Policy Secretariat, UK Statistics Authority, 2 October 2017.

List of Annexes

Annex A: Comparisons considered by the Chair.

Annex A

This table presents a comparison between two projects, the first being one that was previously agreed, the second being the project under consideration. The checkbox responses (☒ and ☐) indicate similarity or non-similarity respectively. Similarity is assessed using the precedent criteria in the first column.

4582/2017	Data analysis to inform research on the size, scope, dynamics and geographic clusters of digital tech industry activity in the UK (precedent)		Data analysis to inform research on UK creative clustering
Sponsor(s)	Tech City		NESTA
Research body	Frontier Economics		Frontier Economics
Project Summary	<p>Tech City commissioned Frontier Economics to facilitate the collection and tabulation of specific business sector data as part of preparing report “Tech Nation 2017”.</p> <p>This comprehensive project researched the growth of digital tech clusters to gauge the UK’s Digital Tech Economy and the wider impact on business, employment and economic trends. It examined the factors that contributed to improved economic performance.</p>		<p>NESTA has undertaken research in the Geography of Creativity (GOC) 2009-2010 and 2015 using ONS microdata to describe the economic activity of creative industries by region and over time.</p> <p>This will involve investigating the level of creative economic activity across the UK, in terms of number of businesses, employment, and sales; geographic variation in the size distribution of creative firms; and the prevalence of high-growth firms.</p>
Project Research Team	Frontier Economics is one of the largest economics consultancies in Europe and regularly advises businesses, public institutions and non-profit organisations on matters of creativity, media, and growth.	Has the research team previously submitted any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
		Yes	Yes
Project Sponsor(s)	NESTA has previously undertaken research in the Geography of Creativity (GOC) 2009-2010 and 2015 using ONS microdata to describe the economic activity of creative industries by region and over time.	Has the sponsor previously sponsored any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
		No	Yes
Is the research scope similar to a previously approved application?	Produced analysis used as evidence base for policy decisions by government for sector specific industries and occupations (tech)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The data from GOC16 were a key component of the sector deal being developed by the Creative Industries Council as part of the government’s industrial strategy and analysis of sector specific industries and occupations (creative)

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4582/2017	Data analysis to inform research on the size, scope, dynamics and geographic clusters of digital tech industry activity in the UK (precedent)		Data analysis to inform research on UK creative clustering
Does the application use the same or similar established legal gateways?	Approved researcher legal gateway	✓	Approved researcher legal gateway
Have the legal gateways being cleared by Legal Services?	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP 16 th Dec 2016	✓	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP 17 th August 2017
Is the researcher accredited?	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme	✓	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme
Does the project use, share or link sensitive data types (e.g. health data, social media data) under the Data Protection Act?	No	✓	No
Does the project use the same or similar data sources?	De-identified data from ONS (BSD, ABS)	✓	De-identified data from ONS (BSD, ABS)
Does the project follow a similar research methodology?	Using ONS business administrative and survey datasets in the SRS to produce aggregate data tabulations allowing regional comparisons and description of current geography of digital techs industries/occupations	✓	Using ONS business administrative and survey datasets in the SRS to produce aggregate data mapping productivity and growth of the creative sector to regional clusters across the UK.
Are data security arrangements met in the current research site?	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS	✓	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS

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4582/2017	Data analysis to inform research on the size, scope, dynamics and geographic clusters of digital tech industry activity in the UK (precedent)		Data analysis to inform research on UK creative clustering
Does the project advocate a clear public benefit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence base for public policy decision making or public service delivery Provides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or society Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses Improves quality, coverage or presentation of existing statistical information 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence base for public policy decision making or public service delivery Provides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or society Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses Improves quality, coverage or presentation of existing statistical information
Is the project transparent enough and are its outcomes shared openly?	Yes, research outcomes updated the 2016 report and were shared on: Tech City UK website published Tech Nation 2017 report), Frontier Economics website, Approved Researcher web pages and case study.	✓	GOC16 had a very broad reach, and its data has been used for a wide range of purposes including supporting the evaluation of the impact of the move of BBC activities to Media City by independent researchers and the BBC Strategy team. The report will be published on the websites of NESTA, Creative Industries Council, Frontier Economics
Precedent Decision	The Frontier Economics research project is an <u>strong</u> precedent for this project.		

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This table presents a comparison between two projects, the first being one that was previously agreed, the second being the project under consideration. The checkbox responses (☑ and ☒) indicate similarity or non-similarity respectively. Similarity is assessed using the precedent criteria in the first column.

	Design skills for innovation and productivity (precedent)		The Construction Skills Network programme 2015-2017	
Sponsor(s)	The Design Council		Construction Industry Training Board	
Research body	Ortus Economic Research		Experian	
Project Summary	Update the GVA estimates in the annual published Design Economy report with the latest data, and to supplement these with additional analysis relating to productivity per hour worked. Investigate the links between <u>skills</u> , design occupations and design industries, and economic outcomes.		This project will report on the labour demand and annual recruitment and skills requirements in the UK construction industry on behalf of the Construction Industry Training Board. It will contribute to the Construction Skills Network programme 2015-2017.	
Project Research Team	Experian's Construction Futures team is a leading construction forecasting team in the UK, specialising in the economic analysis of the construction and related industries in the UK and its regions. The Construction Futures team has collaborated on the Construction Skills Network employment model with the CITB since 2005, manages a monthly survey of contractors' activity as part of the European Commission's harmonised series of business surveys, and a quarterly State-of-Trade survey on behalf of the Federation of Master Builders.		Has the research team previously submitted any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
			No	Yes
Project Sponsor(s)	The Construction Industry Training Board – a non-departmental public body - previously accessed the LFS for this purpose in 2014-2017. The Construction Skills Network (CSN) is a programme that provides market intelligence and insight for the UK construction industry. The data it produces highlights trends and how the industry will change year-on-year, helping businesses to understand the current climate and plan ahead for the future		Has the sponsor previously sponsored any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
			No	Yes
Is the research scope similar to a previously approved application?	Identified skills, knowledge and competencies within an industry (design) and relevant training and recruitment to address these.	☑	Identified skills, knowledge and competencies within an industry (construction) and relevant training and recruitment to address these.	

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	Design skills for innovation and productivity (precedent)		The Construction Skills Network programme 2015-2017
Does the application use the same or similar established legal gateways?	Approved researcher legal gateway	✓	Approved researcher legal gateway
Have the legal gateways being cleared by Legal Services?	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP 31 st March 2017.	✓	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP 30 th June 2017.
Is the researcher accredited?	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme	✓	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme
Does the project use, share or link sensitive data types (e.g. health data, social media data) under the Data Protection Act?	No	✓	No
Does the project use the same or similar data sources?	ABS, APS, ASHE, UKIS	✗	Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2012-2016
Does the project follow a similar research methodology?	Design occupations and design industries were defined by using the unique standard industry classification (SIC) and Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) codes from the de-identified Annual Population Survey (APS) dataset.	✓	Construction occupations defined by using the unique standard industry classification (SIC) and Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) codes from the de-identified LFS
Are data security arrangements met in the current research site?	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS	✓	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS
Does the project advocate a clear public benefit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence base for public policy decision making or public service delivery Provides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or society Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence base for public policy decision making or public service delivery Provides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or society Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses

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	Design skills for innovation and productivity (precedent)		The Construction Skills Network programme 2015-2017
Is the project transparent enough and are its outcomes shared openly?	The results of the research will be published electronically on the Design Council website. A hard copy publication will also be produced.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CITB publish the results on an annual basis. They can be found on the CITB website. http://www.citb.co.uk/research/construction-skills-network/
Precedent Decision	The Ortus Economic research project is an <u>acceptable</u> precedent for this project.		

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This table presents a comparison between two projects, the first being one that was previously agreed, the second being the project under consideration. The checkbox responses (✓ and ✗) indicate similarity or non-similarity respectively. Similarity is assessed using the precedent criteria in the first column.

	Impact evaluation (Phase I and II) of the Innovate UK Technology and Innovation Centre network (Catapults) (precedent)		Evaluation of the economic and welfare benefits of the superfast broadband programme	
Sponsor(s)	Innovate UK		Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport	
Research body	Belmana		Ipsos Mori	
Project Summary	This proposal saw Belmana use ONS Survey data to evaluate the impact of the catapults on business by assessing the performance of businesses that had received support from Innovate UK.		To evaluate the economic and welfare benefits for the superfast broadband programme, and prepare a report to be published on the Gov.uk website. The data requested will be used to implement a variety of spatial analyses comparing small areas with and without superfast broadband connectivity.	
Project Research Team	Ipsos MORI is the second largest market research organisation in the United Kingdom, formed by a merger of Ipsos UK and MORI, two of Britain's leading survey companies.		Has the research team previously submitted any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
			No	Yes
Project Sponsor(s)	The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is a department of the United Kingdom government, with responsibility for culture and sport in England, and some aspects of the media throughout the whole UK, such as broadcasting and internet. It also has responsibility for the tourism, leisure and creative industries (some joint with Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy).		Has the sponsor previously sponsored any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
			No	Yes
Is the research scope similar to a previously approved application?	Assessing impact of national government scheme.	✓		
Does the application use the same or similar established legal gateways?	Approved researcher legal gateway	✓	Approved researcher legal gateway	
Have the legal gateways being cleared by Legal Services?	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP 6 th March 2017	✓	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP (<i>date</i>)	

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	Impact evaluation (Phase I and II) of the Innovate UK Technology and Innovation Centre network (Catapults) (precedent)		Evaluation of the economic and welfare benefits of the superfast broadband programme
Is the researcher accredited?	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme	✓	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme
Does the project use, share or link sensitive data types (e.g. health data, social media data) under the Data Protection Act?	No	✓	No
Does the project use the same or similar data sources?	De-identified data from ONS (BSD, ARDx, BERD, IDBR) Innovate UK de-identified admin data on catapult supported businesses	✓	De-identified data from ONS (BSD,ARD,ASHE,ABS, AFDI, Well-Being) plus broadband coverage data from Ofcom
Does the project follow a similar research methodology?	Matched Innovate UK's administrative data on catapult supported businesses and ONS survey data in the VML	✓	
Are data security arrangements met in the current research site?	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS	✓	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS
Does the project advocate a clear public benefit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence base for public policy decision making or public service delivery Provides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or society Replicates, validates or challenges Official Statistics and/or existing research Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence base for public policy decision making or public service delivery Provides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or society Replicates, validates or challenges Official Statistics and/or existing research Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses
Is the project transparent enough and are its outcomes shared openly?	The phase 1 and 2 research outcomes will be shared in 2018 via: ONS website ONS oversight Approved researcher web pages Belmana website	✓	Channels to share research outcomes will be: ONS Website and oversight DCMS Website Approved Researcher webpages

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	Impact evaluation (Phase I and II) of the Innovate UK Technology and Innovation Centre network (Catapults) (precedent)		Evaluation of the economic and welfare benefits of the superfast broadband programme
Precedent Decision	The Belmana research project on the impact evaluation of the Innovate UK Technology and Innovation Centre network is a reasonable precedent for this project.		

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This table presents a comparison between two projects, the first being one that was previously agreed, the second being the project under consideration. The checkbox responses (✓ and ✗) indicate similarity or non-similarity respectively. Similarity is assessed using the precedent criteria in the first column.

	Data analysis to inform research on the size, scope, dynamics and geographic clusters of digital tech industry activity in the UK (precedent)		Data analysis to inform research on links between infrastructure investment and economic performance then use this evidence for various on-going rail projects (Northern Powerhouse and Crossrail 2)
Sponsor(s)	Tech City UK		Department for Transport
Research body	Frontier Economics		Atkins & CH2M
Project Summary	<p>Tech City commissioned Frontier Economics to facilitate the collection and tabulation of specific business sector data as part of preparing report “Tech Nation 2017”.</p> <p>This comprehensive project researched the growth of digital tech clusters to gauge the UK’s Digital Tech Economy and the wider impact on business, employment and economic trends. It examined the factors that contributed to improved economic performance.</p>		<p>Department for Transport has commissioned ATKINS and CH2M Joint Venture (ACJV) to undertake the Updating Agglomeration Elasticities study. This study will investigate the effects of improvement of transport infrastructure on economic efficiency.</p> <p>Phase 1 - This project will research the links between infrastructure spending and economic performance and use this as an evidence base for major rail projects</p> <p>Phase 2 - Produce a report that highlights best practice in the application of the links between investment and improved performance and productivity</p>
Project Research Team	CH2M specialise in infrastructure and natural resource projects, while Atkins is an international design, engineering and project management consultancy. Together they are two of the three partners responsible for the delivery of Phase One of High Speed 2 rail project.	Has the research team previously submitted any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
		No	Yes
Project Sponsor(s)	The Department for Transport is the ministerial department responsible for the English transport network. They work with agencies and partners to support the transport network that helps the UK’s businesses and gets people and goods travelling around the country.	Has the sponsor previously sponsored any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
		No	Yes
Is the research scope similar to a previously approved application?	Produced an analysis which was used as evidence base for policy decisions by government	✓	Yes, produce analysis then use as an evidence base for decisions about major rail projects.

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	Data analysis to inform research on the size, scope, dynamics and geographic clusters of digital tech industry activity in the UK (precedent)		Data analysis to inform research on links between infrastructure investment and economic performance then use this evidence for various on-going rail projects (Northern Powerhouse and Crossrail 2)
Does the application use the same or similar established legal gateways?	Approved researcher legal gateway	✓	Approved researcher legal gateway
Have the legal gateways being cleared by Legal Services?	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP 16 th Dec 2016	✓	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP 28 th April 2017
Is the researcher accredited?	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme	✓	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme
Does the project use, share or link sensitive data types (e.g. health data, social media data) under the Data Protection Act?	No	✓	No
Does the project use the same or similar data sources?	De-identified data from ONS (BSD, ABS)	✓	De-identified data from ONS (BSD,ARD,ASHE)
Does the project follow a similar research methodology?	Matched administrative and Survey datasets in the VML to produce aggregate data tabulations allowing regional comparisons and description of current geography of digital techs	✓	Linking the datasets in the VML to estimate the linkage between enhancement in economic performance and agglomeration
Are data security arrangements met in the current research site?	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS	✓	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS

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	Data analysis to inform research on the size, scope, dynamics and geographic clusters of digital tech industry activity in the UK (precedent)		Data analysis to inform research on links between infrastructure investment and economic performance then use this evidence for various on-going rail projects (Northern Powerhouse and Crossrail 2)
Does the project advocate a clear public benefit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence base for public policy decision making or public service delivery Provides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or society Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses Improves quality, coverage or presentation of existing statistical information 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence base for public policy decision making or public service delivery Provides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or society Provides a contribution to improving the quality of life of People in the UK Improves quality, coverage or presentation of existing statistical information
Is the project transparent enough and are its outcomes shared openly?	Yes, research outcomes updated the 2016 report and were shared on: ONS Website, Consultancy (Frontier Economics) report and website, Approved researcher web pages and TechNation website	✓	Yes, research outcomes will be (with ONS oversight) shared on: ONS Website, DfT Website Approved Researcher web pages
Precedent decision	The Frontier Economics project a <u>reasonable</u> precedent for this project.		

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This table presents a comparison between two projects, the first being one that was previously agreed, the second being the project under consideration. The checkbox responses (☑ and ☒) indicate similarity or non-similarity respectively. Similarity is assessed using the precedent criteria in the first column.

	Enhance public knowledge of the problems of sewage odour (precedent)		The Societal Impacts Of Publicly Accessible Green Space On Health And Wellbeing	
Sponsor(s)	Thames Water		Fields In Trust	
Research body	Simetrica		Simetrica	
Project Summary	Research into the societal impact of sewage odour from water treatment works on people's health and well-being. This was to be translated into decision making by Thames Water and Ofwat on a health and wellbeing policy for employees, customers and local residents.		Research into the effect of nearby publicly accessible green space on individuals' subjective health and well-being.	
Project Research Team	The consultancy group at Simetrica is formed of a team of academics and experienced social scientists. They offer social impact analysis and policy evaluation to governments, international organisations, and the private and not-for-profit sectors.		Has the research team previously submitted any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
			Yes	Yes
Project Sponsor(s)	Fields In Trust are a national charity with royal patronage. They operate throughout the UK to safeguard recreational spaces and campaign for better statutory protection for all kinds of outdoor sites. They want everyone to have access to free, local outdoor space for sport, play and recreation.		Has the sponsor previously sponsored any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
			No	Yes
Is the research scope similar to a previously approved application?	Project was concerned with health and well-being effects of infrastructure.	☑	Project is concerned with health and well-being effects of infrastructure.	
Does the application use the same or similar established legal gateways?	Approved researcher legal gateway	☑	Approved researcher legal gateway	
Have the legal gateways being cleared by Legal Services?	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP 20 th January 2017	☑	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP 17 th August 2017	
Is the researcher accredited?	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme	☑	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme	

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	Enhance public knowledge of the problems of sewage odour (precedent)		The Societal Impacts Of Publicly Accessible Green Space On Health And Wellbeing
Does the project use, share or link sensitive data types (e.g. health data, social media data) under the Data Protection Act?	Yes, health data from the APS was linked by geography with incident data from Thames Water (e.g. location of water treatment works)	✓	Yes, health data from the APS will be linked by geography using Ordnance Survey location data (e.g. location on public green spaces).
Does the project use the same or similar data sources?	ONS Annual Population Survey data, 2011 – 2015. (Via the VML)	✓	Annual Population Survey: Well-Being, April 2011 - March 2015: Secure Access
Does the project follow a similar research methodology?	Linking of well-being data with location data to determine the effect of proximity with certain areas to people's subjective well-being.	✓	Linking of well-being data with location data to determine the effect of proximity with certain areas to people's subjective well-being.
Are data security arrangements met in the current research site?	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS	✓	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS
Does the project advocate a clear public benefit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or society Replicates, validates or challenges Official Statistics and/or existing research Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses Improves quality, coverage or presentation of existing statistical information 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or society Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses Improves quality, coverage or presentation of existing statistical information
Is the project transparent enough and are its outcomes shared openly?	ONS will have sight of the use of data and the findings prior to publication. Project will be publicised via the ONS AR listing on the ONS.gov.uk website. Results to be published on website and water company literature, academic papers were submitted to journals.	✓	Yes. ONS will have sight of the use of data and the findings prior to publication. Project will be publicised via the ONS AR listing on the ONS.gov.uk website. Results of the study will be published on the Simetrica and Fields In Trust websites. Research will be published in peer-reviewed reports. Also to be submitted to academic journals under Open Source Publication guidelines.
Precedent decision	The Simetrica research project is a <u>strong</u> precedent for this project.		

This table presents a comparison between two projects, the first being one that was previously agreed, the second being the project under consideration. The checkbox responses (✓ and ✗) indicate similarity or non-similarity respectively. Similarity is assessed using the precedent criteria in the first column.

4537/2017	Data analysis to inform research on the size, scope, dynamics and geographic clusters of digital tech industry activity in the UK. (precedent)		Greater Birmingham and Solihull Creative Economy Mapping	
Sponsor(s)	Tech City UK		Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP)	
Research body	Frontier Economics		BOP Consulting	
Project Summary	Tech City UK planned to update earlier research (published in 2016) on the size, scope, dynamics and geographic clusters of digital tech industry activity in the UK. The annual Tech Nation report described the trends in the digital economy and is published on the Tech City website.		BOP Consulting will identify the size of the creative economy within GBSLEP, and it's growth/shrinkage over time compared with other core cities in England. This will inform GBSLEP's strategic economic plan, so as to more efficiently direct public resources and foster growth in the creative economy.	
Project Research Team	BOP Consulting is an international consultancy with a 20-year track record of working in the cultural and creative economy. They specialise in promoting culture and creative industries within broader economic, social and educational agendas.		Has the research team previously submitted any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
			No	Yes
Project Sponsor(s)	Greater Birmingham & Solihull contains a population of nearly two million, and is home to a million jobs and an economy worth £40 billion. It enjoys a concentration of economic drivers second only to London.		Has the sponsor previously sponsored any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
			No	Yes
Is the research scope similar to a previously approved application?	Frontier constructed size estimates and cluster analysis of tech sector businesses at multiple levels of geography across the UK.	✓	The study will cover the individual workers in the creative economy within Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership's area, and the other core cities in England and Wales for comparison.	
Does the application use the same or similar established legal gateways?	Approved researcher legal gateway	✓	Approved researcher legal gateway	
Have the legal gateways being cleared by Legal Services?	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP 16 th December 2016	✓	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP August 17 th 2017	

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4537/2017	Data analysis to inform research on the size, scope, dynamics and geographic clusters of digital tech industry activity in the UK. (precedent)		Greater Birmingham and Solihull Creative Economy Mapping
Is the researcher accredited?	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme	✓	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme
Does the project use, share or link sensitive data types (e.g. health data, social media data) under the Data Protection Act?	No	✓	No
Does the project use the same or similar data sources?	De-identified data from ONS (Business Structure Database, Annual Business Survey)	✓	Individuals in creative roles and occupations will be identified within the Annual Population Survey.
Does the project follow a similar research methodology?	Frontier Economics matched administrative and survey datasets in the VML to produce aggregate data tabulations which allowed regional comparisons and description of current geography of digital technologies.	✓	The Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) recognises particular occupations in the Standard Occupation Classifications (SOCs) as creative, as well as particular industries in the Standard Industry Classifications (SICs). Analysis of the workforce in creative industries and occupations will use the SIC and SOC codes in the APS data in the Secure Research Service.
Are data security arrangements met in the current research site?	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS	✓	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS
Does the project advocate a clear public benefit?	(delete as applicable) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Provides evidence base for public policy decision making or public service deliveryProvides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or societyReplicates, validates or challenges Official Statistics and/or existing researchProvides a contribution to improving the quality of	✓	(delete as applicable) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Provides evidence base for public policy decision making or public service deliveryProvides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or societyReplicates, validates or challenges Official Statistics and/or existing researchProvides a contribution to improving the quality of

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4537/2017	Data analysis to inform research on the size, scope, dynamics and geographic clusters of digital tech industry activity in the UK. (precedent)		Greater Birmingham and Solihull Creative Economy Mapping
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> life of people in the UK Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses Improves quality, coverage or presentation of existing statistical information 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> life of people in the UK Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses Improves quality, coverage or presentation of existing statistical information
Is the project transparent enough and are its outcomes shared openly?	Yes, research outcomes updated the 2016 report and were shared on: ONS Website, Consultancy (Frontier Economics) report and website, Approved researcher web pages and TechNation website.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Results will be published by BOP Consulting on behalf of GBSLEP on the websites of BOP Consulting and GBSLEP. Hard copies will be shared with any interested parties.
Precedent decision	The BOP Consulting research project is a <u>reasonable</u> precedent for this project.		

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This table presents a comparison between two projects, the first being one that was previously agreed, the second being the project under consideration. The checkbox responses (☑ and ☒) indicate similarity or non-similarity respectively. Similarity is assessed using the precedent criteria in the first column.

	Impact evaluation (Phase I and II) of the Innovate UK Technology and Innovation Centre network (Catapults) (precedent)		Evaluation of HMRC Enterprise Management Incentives	
Sponsor(s)	Innovate UK		Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs	
Research body	Belmana		Ipsos Mori	
Project Summary	This proposal saw Belmana use ONS Survey data to evaluate the impact of the catapults on business by assessing the performance of businesses that had received support from Innovate UK.		HMRC seeks to evaluate the impact of the Enterprise Management Incentives (EMI) scheme, (which allows selected SMEs in the UK to offer tax-efficient share options to their employees) to explore how the scheme is working for businesses, including its design, targeting and accessibility.	
Project Research Team	Ipsos MORI is the second largest market research organisation in the United Kingdom, formed by a merger of Ipsos UK and MORI, two of Britain's leading survey companies		Has the research team previously submitted any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
			No	Yes
Project Sponsor(s)	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HM Revenue and Customs or HMRC)[3] is a non-ministerial department of the UK Government responsible for the collection of taxes, the payment of some forms of state support and the administration of other regulatory regimes including the national minimum wage.		Has the sponsor previously sponsored any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
			No	Yes
Is the research scope similar to a previously approved application?	Assessing impact of national government scheme.	☑	Assessing impact of national government scheme	
Does the application use the same or similar established legal gateways?	Approved researcher legal gateway	☑	Approved researcher legal gateway	
Have the legal gateways being cleared by Legal Services?	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP 6 th March 2017	☑	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP 30 th June 2017	

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	Impact evaluation (Phase I and II) of the Innovate UK Technology and Innovation Centre network (Catapults) (precedent)		Evaluation of HMRC Enterprise Management Incentives
Is the researcher accredited?	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme	✓	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme
Does the project use, share or link sensitive data types (e.g. health data, social media data) under the Data Protection Act?	No	✓	No
Does the project use the same or similar data sources?	De-identified data from ONS (BSD, ARDx, BERD, IDBR) Innovate UK de-identified admin data on catapult supported businesses	✓	BRES, ARDX, ABS, CIS
Does the project follow a similar research methodology?	Matched Innovate UK's administrative data on catapult supported businesses and ONS survey data in the VML	✓	Matching Ipsos Mori's survey of firms participating in the scheme with data listed above in the VML
Are data security arrangements met in the current research site?	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS	✓	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS
Does the project advocate a clear public benefit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence base for public policy decision making or public service delivery Provides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or society Replicates, validates or challenges Official Statistics and/or existing research Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence base for public policy decision making or public service delivery Provides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or society Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses Improves quality, coverage or presentation of existing statistical information
Is the project transparent enough and are its outcomes shared openly?	The phase 1 and 2 research outcomes will be shared in 2018 via: ONS website, ONS oversight, Approved researcher web pages, and Belmana website	✓	Research is intended to be made public in line with government social research guidance with the report placed on the gov.uk website within 90 days of completion
Precedent Decision	The Ipsos Mori research project is an <u>acceptable</u> precedent for this project.		

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This table presents a comparison between two projects, the first being one that was previously agreed, the second being the project under consideration. The checkbox responses (☑ and ☒) indicate similarity or non-similarity respectively. Similarity is assessed using the precedent criteria in the first column.

	Enhance public knowledge of the problems of sewage odour (precedent)		The societal impacts of water problems on health and wellbeing	
Sponsor(s)	Thames Water		Anglian Water	
Research body	Simetrica Ltd		Simetrica Ltd	
Project Summary	<p>Thames Water Utilities Ltd, known as Thames Water, commissioned Simetrica Ltd, a research consultancy specialising in policy evaluation, to carry out research into the societal impact of sewage odour on people's health and well-being.</p> <p>The research outcomes contributed to Thames Water's health and wellbeing strategy which set out the steps they needed to take to achieve their vision of zero harm and improve health and wellbeing, for their employees, customers and everyone that comes into contact with the company.</p>		<p>Simetrica Ltd is has been commissioned by Anglia Water to develop original research to evaluate the societal impacts of water industry related flooding and roadworks on health and wellbeing in the UK.</p> <p>The research focuses on the primary impacts of these water-relevant factors on individuals in the UK in terms of subjective wellbeing and general health, as recorded in the Annual Population Survey, matched against records of water-related incidents.</p>	
Project Research Team	The consultancy group at Simetrica is formed of a team of academics and experienced social scientists. They offer social impact analysis and policy evaluation to governments, international organisations, and the private and not-for-profit sectors.		Has the research team previously submitted any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
			Yes	Yes
Project Sponsor(s)	Anglian Water supply water and water recycling services to more than six million domestic and business customers.		Has the sponsor previously sponsored any project approved by NSDEC	Full suitability assessment completed?
			No	Yes
Is the research scope similar to a previously approved application?	Scope of research was service area of supplier (Thames Water).	☑	Scope of research is service area of supplier (Anglia Water). Simetrica carried out exploratory analysis to inform the scope of the project.	
Does the application use the same or similar established legal gateways?	Approved researcher legal gateway	☑	Approved researcher legal gateway	

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	Enhance public knowledge of the problems of sewage odour (precedent)		The societal impacts of water problems on health and wellbeing
Have the legal gateways being cleared by Legal Services?	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP 20 th January 2017	✓	Yes, tested at a meeting of MRP 16 th May 2017
Is the researcher accredited?	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme	✓	Trained and accredited via the Approved Researcher Scheme
Does the project use, share or link sensitive data types (e.g. health data, social media data) under the Data Protection Act?	Yes	✓	Yes
Does the project use the same or similar data sources?	Yes	✓	Yes
Does the project follow a similar research methodology?	De-identified water incident data was merged with health & wellbeing data from annual pop survey and assessed for correlations.	✓	De-identified water incident data to be merged with health & wellbeing data from the annual population survey and assessed for correlations.
Are data security arrangements met in the current research site?	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS	✓	Data access via SRS, so all outputs are checked by ONS
Does the project advocate a clear public benefit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or society Replicates, validates or challenges Official Statistics and/or existing research Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses Improves quality, coverage or presentation of existing statistical information 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides evidence base for decisions which benefit the UK economy or society Replicates, validates or challenges Official Statistics and/or existing research Extends understanding of social and economic matters by improving knowledge or challenging widely accepted analyses Improves quality, coverage or presentation of existing statistical information

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	Enhance public knowledge of the problems of sewage odour (precedent)		The societal impacts of water problems on health and wellbeing
Is the project transparent enough and are its outcomes shared openly?	Results were made public, published on website and water company literature, academic papers were submitted to journals.	☑	Results are to be made public and academic papers to be submitted to journals.
Precedent decision	The Simetrica research project is a <u>strong</u> precedent for this project.		

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Ethnicity from names

Oral report

Owen Abbot

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Any other business

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