

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Minutes
Thursday 30 June 2022
Boardroom, London

Present

UK Statistics Authority

Sir Robert Chote (Chair)
Sian Jones (Deputy Chair)
Professor Sir John Aston
Sam Beckett
Helen Boaden
Professor Sir Ian Diamond
Richard Dobbs
Professor Jonathan Haskel
Ed Humpherson
Nora Nanayakkara
Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter
Professor Anne Trefethen

Also in attendance

Esther Akleh-Amankwah (for item 11)
Nick Bateson
Owen Brace
Robert Bumpstead
Joe Moore (for item 11)
Alison Pritchard
Jacob Seamons (for item 11)

Apologies

None

1. Apologies

1.1 There were no apologies received.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 There were no new declarations of interest.

3. Minutes and matters arising from previous meeting

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 April 2022 were agreed.

4. Report from the Authority Chair

4.1 Non-Executives had met prior to the Board meeting. They had discussed topics including planning for the Non-executive Director recruitment process, the 2025 Civil Service headcount exercise and the Integrated Data Service.

4.2 The Chair reported on his activities since taking on the role as Authority Chair on 1 June:

- i. Sir Robert had visited ONS sites in Newport, Titchfield, London and Edinburgh;
- ii. a range of introductory meetings had been held with colleagues across the organisation including teams from: Health, Population and Methods, Public Policy Analysis, Economic, Social and Environmental Statistics, People and Business Services, Data Governance, Legislation and Policy and the Office for Statistics Regulation;
- iii. Sir Robert alongside Professor Sir Ian Diamond had attended the Government Statistical Service Heads of Profession meeting on 14 June: and
- iv. Sir Robert had met Alistair McAlpine, Chief Statistician Scottish Government, Pete Whitehouse, National Records of Scotland (NRS) and Graeme Roy, Scottish Fiscal Commission.

4.3 On behalf of the Board Sir Robert noted thanks to Sian Jones for her time as Interim Chair to the Authority from 1 April 2022 to 30 May 2022.

5. Report from the Chief Executive [SA(22)31]

5.1 Sir Ian provided the Board with an overview of activity and issues since the last meeting, highlighting the following:

- i. the first release of the England and Wales Census 2021 had been published on 28 June providing population and household estimates for England and Wales at local authority level;
- ii. publication of the ONS Business Plan following discussion by the Board;
- iii. the support by ONS for colleagues at NRS on the Scotland Census 2022;
- iv. the successful release of CIS-Digital Private Beta on 7 July as planned;
- v. publication of findings from the first wave of the Ukraine Humanitarian Response Insight Survey, and the launch of a second survey for those arriving since 20 April;
- vi. progress on the programme of work on the cost of living including the publication of experimental statistics tracking the price of 30 lowest cost grocery items;
- vii. the impact of the Over 50s Lifestyle Survey and the request by the Cabinet Office for ONS to run a second wave of the survey over the summer;
- viii. the Civil Service 2025 submission regarding headcount, which would be submitted by close of play that day (30 June); and
- ix. ONS had received a gold award from Mind for the second year in a row recognising the support provided to colleagues across the organisation to manage their mental health.

5.2 Sir Ian informed the Board about changes to the Senior Leadership Team. Nick Bateson, Director of Finance, Planning and Performance would be leaving the organisation later in the year for a Chief Operating Officer role at The Health Foundation. Following a recruitment process for temporary cover for the role of

Director General for Health Population and Methods Emma Rourke had been appointed.

6. Report from the Director General for Regulation [SA(22)32]

- 6.1 Ed Humpherson provided an update on regulation activity since the last meeting. He had attended: the Scottish Parliamentary Hearing COVID-19 Recovery Committee to discuss communication of COVID-19 public health information; and the European Conference on Quality in Official Statistics, with a presentation by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) team on the public good research programme.
- 6.2 The Board heard that OSR, in accordance with the agreed policy, continued to receive requests from statistical producers for alternative release times, which were being assessed on a case by case basis.

7. Report from the Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

- 7.1 Nora Nanayakkara provided an update on the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee which had met on 16 June.
- 7.2 Committee members had considered the Annual Report and Accounts 2021/22 and recommended the National Statistician's approval subject to resolution of a number of minor points by the Finance Team with external auditors.
- 7.3 Nora Nanayakkara reported that based on the work of the Committee during the year and assurance work carried out by external and internal auditors, it was her opinion that the Authority's governance and control framework was generally effective. The Committee had welcomed the Moderate audit opinion by the Head of Internal Audit for a second consecutive year. The Committee had highlighted the improvements in risk and governance, and the commitment by Sir Ian and the Senior Leadership Team to sustaining improvements in cross organisational delivery and risk management that had been made in the previous year.
- 7.4 The Board noted thanks to the Chair and the Committee for their work during 2021/22 and endorsed the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Annual Report 2021/22.

8. Report from the Chair of the Regulation Committee

- 8.1 Professor Anne Trefethen provided an update on the Regulation Committee held on 7 April 2022.
- 8.2 The Committee had considered:
 - i. a presentation by ONS colleagues on the transformation of population statistics including the delivery timeline; and
 - ii. OSR's assessment of the 2021 Censuses in England and Wales and Northern Ireland; and
 - iii. the impact of the Authority's Intervention policy.
- 8.3 The Committee had approved OSR's Business Plan and programme of work 2022/23.

9. Annual Report and Accounts [SA(22)33]

- 9.1 Nick Bateson introduced a paper which presented the final draft version of the Annual Report and Accounts 2021/22, and provided an overview of the Authority's Annual Report and key audited financial results for the year.
- 9.2 The Board had earlier heard that the Annual Report and Accounts had been approved by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at its meeting on 16 June, subject to the resolution of a small number of points. The National Statistician was scheduled to sign the report on 4 July.
- 9.3 Board members discussed the Annual Report. It was noted that the change in the cost of intangible assets related to the transformation of legacy systems. The change in

average working days lost related to the impact of the pandemic. The use of contingent labour across the organisation was underpinned by a rigorous process, which required approval by Sir Ian.

- 9.4 The Board approved the Annual Report and Accounts 2021/22 ahead of laying before Parliament on 14 July.

10. Policy Liaison Unit [SA(22)34]

- 10.1 Joe Moore, Esther Akleh-Amankwah and Jacob Seamons introduced a paper which provided an overview of the work of the ONS's Policy Liaison Unit (PLU). The PLU had been established in 2020 to help support the response to COVID-19 with ONS data and analysis, and had since been expanded to a team of four.
- 10.2 The Board heard how the PLU operated as the link between the ONS and central government to cover policy areas beyond COVID-19 and maximise the opportunities for ONS data and analysis. The PLU work with strategic teams across the Cabinet Office, No 10, and other departments such as the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities. Over the last twelve months the PLU had helped mobilise ONS data and insights across a range of areas including most recently the UK Humanitarian Response Insight Survey and the Over 50s Lifestyle Survey.
- 10.3 The Board welcomed the update and commended the team on their delivery. It was noted that the team was separate from policy conversations, its role was to understand the needs of policy makers and ensure decisions were informed by the latest and most relevant ONS evidence and analysis.

11. Integrated Data Service Programme [SA(22)35]

- 11.1 Alison Pritchard introduced a paper which provided an update on key elements of the Integrated Data Programme.
- 11.2 The Board heard about the 0 Gateway Review, which had been undertaken by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority between 20 and 23 June, had received an amber rating. Work was already underway to respond to the recommendations. It was noted that the recently launched Government's Digital and Data Strategy identified the Integrated Data Service (IDS) as a core component of data sharing for better decision making and evaluation under Mission 3: to make all critical data assets available across government through trusted platforms such as the IDS, with Sir Ian as sponsor.
- 11.3 Board members discussed the process of Digital Economy Act accreditation for the IDS, which would allow use of data for the public good.
- 11.4 The Board would continue to remain engaged in the delivery of the IDS as the work progressed with the launch of the Initial Public Beta scheduled for 15 July.

12. Strategic Risks [SA(22)36]

- 12.1 Nick Bateson introduced a paper which provided an update on the Authority Strategic Risk profile following discussions at the National Statistics Executive Committee (NSEG) on 17 May 2022 and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on 19 May 2022.
- 12.2 The Board noted the update on the strategic risk profile and the proposed risk appetite for the overarching strategic risk on 'Independence and Trustworthiness'.

13. Public Confidence in Official Statistics [SA(22)37]

- 13.1 Robert Bumpstead and Romy Overton-Edwards introduced a paper which summarised the latest report on Public Confidence on Official Statistics (PCOS), commissioned by the Authority and published by NatCen in April.

13.2 The Board heard the highlights of the survey. 89 per cent of respondents who gave a view trusted the Office for National Statistics and 96 per cent agreed that it was important for there to be a body such as the Authority to speak out against the misuse of statistics. Awareness of the ONS had significantly increased, as had the number of respondents who reported that they used ONS data.

14. Any other business

14.1 The next meeting would take place on 28 July.

UK STATISTICS AUTHORITY

Agenda

30 June 2022, 11.00-14.00, London Boardroom

Chair: Sir Robert Chote

Apologies: None

Attendees: Esther Akleh-Amankwah (for item 8), Joe Moore (for item 8), Romy Overton-Edwards (for item 10), Jacob Seamons (for item 8)

NED Session: 10.30-11.00

1 11.00-11.05 5 mins	Minutes and matters arising from previous meetings Declarations of interest	Meeting of 28 April 2022
2 11.05-11.20 15 mins	Report from the Authority Chair	Oral report Sir Robert Chote
3 11.20-11.45 25 mins	Report from the Chief Executive	SA(22)31 Prof. Sir Ian Diamond
4 11.45-11.55 10 mins	Report from the Director-General for Regulation	SA(22)32 Ed Humpherson
5 11.55-12.10 15 mins	Report from Committee Chairs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit and Risk Assurance Committee• Regulation Committee	Oral report Nora Nanayakkara Prof. Anne Trefethen
6 12.10-12.30 20 mins	Annual Report and Accounts 2021/22	SA(22)33 Nick Bateson
12.30-12.40 10 mins	Lunch	
7 12.40-13.05 25 mins	Policy Liaison Unit	SA(22)34 Joe Moore Esther Akleh-Amankwah Jacob Seamons
8 13.05-13.20 15 mins	Integrated Data Service	SA(22)35 Alison Pritchard
9 13.20-13.40 20 mins	Strategic Risks	SA(22)36 Nick Bateson
10 13.40-13.55 15 mins	Public Confidence in Official Statistics	SA(22)37 Robert Bumpstead Romy Overton-Edwards
11 13.55-14.00 5 mins	Any Other Business	

Next meeting: Thursday 28 July 2022, Remote Teams meeting

*Chief Executive's Report, June 2022***Purpose**

1. This provides the Authority Board with an overview of activity and issues for June 2022.

Summary

2. June has seen a focus on finalising our plans for the **Census** first release on 28 June. We also continue to provide analytical insights to central government on the **Russian invasion of Ukraine**, launching a second survey for those arriving since 20 April. At the start of the month, I visited the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development** (OECD) in Paris to discuss our partnership as well as Beyond GDP (Gross Domestic Product), subnational data, national accounts, wellbeing and access to data. I was delighted to hear that ONS has for the second consecutive year received a **gold award from Mind**, recognising the support we give to colleagues across the office.

Review of recent activities

3. On **census**, the first release will take place on 28 June, covering both population and household estimates for England and Wales by sex and five-year age group at local authority level. There will be a wide programme of media, cross-government and public engagement surrounding the releases, including events at English and Welsh schools in the 'Let's Count' campaign. The ONS also continues to work closely with international colleagues to advise on the ongoing Scottish census.
4. Our **population statistics transformation** programme is also on track for delivery. In May, we published our latest admin-based ethnicity research covering 2016-2020. We have also agreed an ambitious timeline for producing research-based mid-2022 population estimates by local authority/age/sex. In September, we will provide mid-2022 estimates from our Dynamic Population Model for a selection of local authorities. In December, we will then extend this output to include all local authorities.
5. All three Devolved Administrations have **signed off the sample sizes for the COVID-19 Infection Survey (CIS)** for 2022/23, and our overall post-April 2022 targets has been agreed and signed off by the UK Health Security agency (UKHSA). **UKHSA** have approached ONS to begin discussions around funding for 2023/24 and the **CIS Digital Private Beta** is progressing well, with over 80 per cent opt-in rate to move to digital for wave 1 of participants. The public beta is due to release on 7 July with a phased parallel run before study worker visits cease on 31 July.
6. **Wellcome Trust** has given the green light to go ahead with a full five-year bid for the Pandemic Preparedness Toolkit, to be submitted in mid-July. We have held positive conversations so far and have presented to the Trust's Surveillance Working Group.
7. The **Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence (ESCoE)** held its annual Conference, organised in partnership with the ONS, at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow 25-27 May 2022. This was the first major conference in the field of economic measurement which has been held in physical form. The conference was a success with 206 attendees and a packed roster of presentations, workshops and panel discussions. Keynote Speakers included Sir Charles Bean, Chiara Criscuolo (OECD) and Michael Pollitt (Judge Business School, University of Cambridge).
8. Continuing our work on the **Ukraine Humanitarian Response Insight Survey**, we published findings from the first wave of our study in both English and Ukrainian. This has provided vital insight to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Home Office, the Department for Education, the Department for Work and Pensions and the Devolved Administrations. We have now launched a second survey for those

arriving since 20 April and are advancing plans to build a cohort study to monitor changes over time, and of UK sponsors.

9. On **cost of living**, we published experimental statistics tracking the price of [30 lowest-cost grocery items](#). This made use of the web-scraping capabilities built as part of our consumer prices transformation work to track online grocery price quotes from seven major supermarket retailers' websites. The analysis was in response to questions raised on the inflation experience of those on lower incomes. The reception from media and other stakeholders was very positive. The work formed part of a broader programme of work on the cost of living: updated plans for that work published [here](#).
10. We have successfully launched a [consultation](#) this month on the redesign of the **Crime Survey for England and Wales**. This included taking stakeholders through our plans and fielding their questions. The consultation runs until 21 August. On the labour market, we are involved with **Matt Warman MP**'s review of a future labour market, engaging with Cabinet Office on running further surveys and analysis of older workers, and have produced a series of article on hybrid working, self-employment and youth unemployment.
11. This month also saw the first meeting of the new National Statistician's Committee for Advice on Standards for Economic Statistics (**NSCASE**). The committee, chaired by Professor Martin Weale, will play an important role supporting decisions around guidance for economic statistics, particular as we approach the revision of the United Nation's System of National Accounts in 2025. This meeting provided a stocktake of the issues that may arise, and laid productive groundwork for their future workplan.
12. The **judicial review** claim brought by various pension funds against both the UK Statistics Authority (the Authority) and Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT) in relation to the decision to reform Retail Price Index will be heard by the High Court on 21 and 22 June.
13. Internationally, I visited the **OECD** for bilateral meetings with Paul Schreyer (Chief Statistician) and Romina Boarini (Director of the Centre for Wellbeing, Inclusion, Sustainability and Equal Opportunity). We discussed Beyond GDP, subnational data, national accounts, wellbeing, social mobility, environment, productivity, digital trade and smart data. I, alongside my leadership team, will also be hosting a visit from Stats **New Zealand**, including their Chief Statistician and deputies, on 27 June.
14. The public **COVID-19 inquiry** terms of reference have been publicly consulted on and are now with the Prime Minister for final approval. In the meantime, an inquiry response team has been set up within the ONS, with Rob Bumpstead as Senior Responsible Officer.
15. On the **Integrated Data Service**, Initial Public Beta Release is scheduled for mid-July 2022. This release will build on the capabilities offered by the New Private Beta environment released on 30 April, which saw a move from the Amazon Web Services platform to a Google Cloud Platform, along with service enhancements, and an increase in data and users.
16. An Infrastructure and Projects Authority **Gateway 0 Annual Review** will be conducted by external reviewers to assess the overall health of the Integrated Data Service (IDS) programme from 20 to 23 June 2022. Preparations are progressing as planned with interviews scheduled and requested artefacts provided for review team assessment. The final report, expected to be published by mid-July 2022. Work is also ongoing to strengthen the financial benefits to inform the Full Business Case Refresh which is due to HMT in September 2022. The IDS branding has also now been agreed internally.
17. In **survey data collection**, we are moving at pace all our current Business Surveys to the new Google Cloud platform utilising new technologies proven in the census. All

surveys should be moved off the legacy platform by the end of this financial year and we continue to build new capability to move our remaining paper surveys to digital.

18. The **ONS Geography** Data Products and Operations teams were nominated and shortlisted for a **Geography in Government award** for the work they are doing on the Statistical Geography. They won the category of 'Advancing Geospatial Data Science' for their work on automating the updates to the statistical geographies for 2021 census. The Geography teams have pulled together to get a significant service off the ground, and have produced an efficient, reproducible analytical pipeline.
19. Following the appointment of a new Commissioner to the Information Commissioner's Office, the Data Protection Officer team in ONS is continuing to engage positively, including on the development of the data protection impact assessment for the IDS. The **Centre for Applied Data Ethics** has also recently published guidance on the ethical considerations associated with qualitative methods which provides a practical resource that we believe will help researchers to identify potential ethical issues in their qualitative work and to consider how these issues can be appropriately mitigated going forward.
20. Finally, I wanted to update the Board on two significant awards. ONS entered into the Civil Service Commission's first **Mark of Excellence Awards** and I am pleased to say we were successful. The award is being given to the departments demonstrating consistent excellent practice in promoting a career in the Civil Service and widening opportunities to reach a more diverse demographic. ONS has been recognised for its commitment to inclusive recruitment practice, particularly focused on improving accessibility to the Civil Service for under-represented communities.
21. Secondly, ONS has received a **gold award from Mind** for the second year. This recognises the support we give to colleagues to manage their mental health, and ensure healthy working environments and practices. While this is a positive result, we have further work to do, particularly in ensuring that colleagues' report experiences that are as positive as our organisational initiatives. We will be working with the results over coming weeks to shape our actions on mental health and wellbeing.

Professor Sir Ian Diamond, National Statistician, June 2022

Update from the Director General for Regulation

Purpose

1. This paper provides the UK Statistics Authority Board with an overview of Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) activities.

Discussion

2. Our main areas of focus since the last Board meeting have been:
 - i. **Scottish parliamentary committee hearing:** I attended the [COVID-19 Recovery Committee](#), joining the second panel of the day with Ofcom and Public Health Scotland to discuss communication of COVID-19 public health information. This was a good opportunity to highlight our Trust, Quality and Value (TQV) pillars as well as to stress the importance of intelligent transparency and to discuss where we can learn more and improve on data gaps.
 - ii. **OSR Away day:** almost all OSR colleagues were able to meet face to face for the first time in two years at our away day. The focus of this time together was to build relationships across the office and to have the opportunity to dig deeper into our vision, brand, voice and values. Overall, this was a positive and successful awayday.
 - iii. **Levelling up:** There is a significant amount of work going on within OSR on Levelling up and how OSR can support the TQV data issues this brings. I was asked to contribute to a podcast by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales on what levelling up means and have been invited to speak at an upcoming webinar on measuring levelling up. We also published a blog on [What is Levelling Up and how will its success be measured?](#)
 - iv. **Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence:** My colleague Iain Russell led a very informative and practical session on industrial classifications at the recent Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence conference in Glasgow. This was an excellent session that discussed the value in a more dynamic classifications framework that could keep pace with the changing economy.
 - v. **European Conference on Quality in Official Statistics:** I attended the 2022 conference in Vilnius, Lithuania which is dedicated to enforcing the dissemination of knowledge, recent research, and good practices on emerging new challenges related to quality in official statistics. OSR presented at the conference on the public good research programme which elicited a lot of engagement from the international audience. This was a great opportunity to engage with a wider audience and there was an excellent thread on trust and value that I would like to explore further with OSR.
 - vi. **Census outputs:** I was very pleased to write to Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency confirming [National Statistics designation for the 2021 Census in NI](#). I am planning to write to ONS to confirm designation for the England and Wales census on 27 June and will continue to review the Scotland census situation.
 - vii. **Wider reach:** OSR was asked to present and take part in a 'study group' event about the Public Perception of Science run by Newton Gateway to Mathematics. We posed a misinformation challenge asking how we can differentiate between misleading uses and legitimate political debate. As well as an amazing opportunity to highlight what the OSR does to a wider audience it was also interesting to hear the study groups thoughts on how we could try to classify claims as misleading.
 - viii. **OSR outputs:** We have had a very busy month with several outputs.
 - I published a blog on how [OSR secure change](#), sharing my thinking on how we secure impact and how this links to our business plan;

- we published a news story on [analytical leadership](#) to complement our work launched in May to support change and strengthen analytical leadership across government;
 - we wrote to UK Health Security Agency regarding our [review on mandatory healthcare associated infection surveillance in England](#);
 - we wrote to the [Home Office, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service](#) and [Police service of NI](#) about our reviews of hate crime;
 - we wrote to Northern Ireland Government departments on a range of issues not limited to our [review of suicide statistics](#) and the [adaptation of the Northern Ireland Safe Community Survey](#);
 - We wrote to ONS on its response to [COVID-19 infection survey statistics](#) and provided [national designation for Country and regional public sector finance](#); [and](#)
 - We wrote to the registers of Scotland on our compliance check on their stats on [land and property titles](#).
- ix. **Casework:** The National Education Union (NEU) [wrote to us](#) with concerns on a recently published White Paper from the Department for Education (DfE). I replied to the [NEU](#) and wrote to [DfE](#) on the Transparency of trust-led school system evidence White Paper. This public intervention attracted some media coverage. [DfE replied](#) and have published additional information containing the data and methodological details in support of the analysis in the White Paper annex. We also [published a statement](#) calling for greater transparency around statistics on Russia sanctions.
- x. **09:30 consultation:** We continue to get requests for alternative release times and are assessing these requests on a case-by-case basis.

Conclusion

3. On my mind at the moment are:

- i. **OSR management and development:** One of my main ambitions for the year is to improve management and staff development in OSR. A significant factor here has been the temporary secondment for my Deputy Director to the Data Science Campus. In response, I have created a new role of Grade 6 Casework manager role to cover some of the responsibilities of the Deputy Director. We have successfully concluded recruitment. The high calibre of OSR applicants has enabled me to offer, on a rolling two month basis, a development opportunity for three members of staff. This will not only provide support to my Senior Leadership Team and the casework function but will also enable my staff to get experience at a higher grade.
- ii. **Wider reach:** This is one of our main ambitions for the year. I am very committed to securing greater profile and impact for OSR. It remains a challenge, but we are seeing a degree of interest in the support we can provide across the analytical function – including our presentation at the Heads of Profession meeting and our event for analysts in Government.

Ed Humpherson, Director General for Regulation, OSR, 22 June 2022

Regulatory Activities Dashboard

June 2022

Authority Board

Children, Education and Skills

Assessment: Key Stage 4 statistics in England discussing findings and drafting report with view to publish in July.
Casework: Health and Wellbeing Census in Scotland responding to concerns around the confidentiality and ethics of the census of school age children.
The case for a fully trust led system letter published on transparency and robustness of evidence underpinning the Department for Education 'Opportunity for all' white paper.
Compliance Check: Welsh Government School Workforce Annual Census started and will into a wider review of this data collection.
Systemic Review: Children and Young People planning for follow up engagement.

Labour Market and Welfare

Assessments: Reviewing evidence for requirements for the Living Costs and Food Survey.
Casework: Preparing background briefing around use of **employment statistics**. Ongoing open casework with DWP, no new issues.
Cost of living position statement/piece. Drafting and finalising internally, plans to publish end June.
Compliance checks: Analysing DWP **Pensioner Income series** statistics, speaking with users, assess against the Code. Plans to publish letter in July.
ONS transformation of the Labour Force Survey (Phase 1). Engaging with ONS regularly and conducting focused user engagement to understand impact of proposed changes.

Transport, Environment and Climate Change

Assessment: People and Nature Survey. Renewed interest from Natural England in PaNS. Letter from the DEFRA HoP, expected.
Compliance Checks: Desk research continues for **Food Security** report. Reviewed **BEIS Fuel Poverty statistics**, spoken to users, shared findings with BEIS. Letter publication planned for July.
Systemic Review: Accessibility of Transport Networks – follow up with producers ongoing.
Climate Change under the line paper going to Regulation Committee in July, providing an update on progress since the publication and plans for future work.

Housing, Planning and Local Services

Assessment: Statutory Homelessness in England statistics: Continuing engagement in line with DLUHC action plan, addressing requirements.
Compliance Checks: Registers of Scotland **Land and property titles in Scotland by country-of-origin** letter published 31 May. Follow up with **Fire statistics** produced by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.
Rapid reviews: Follow-up held for DLUHC's **MI on Support for people sleeping rough in England**. Arranging follow up for review of WG's **MI on Homelessness accommodation provision and rough sleeping**.
Engagement: with ONS and DLUHC on **sub-national data** developments.

Health and Social Care

Assessments: NHS Education Scotland **Workforce** statistics and ONS statistics on **Deaths in the Care Sector** underway.
Casework: Misleading assertions made in the House of Commons on the harms done by the COVID-19 vaccine - UKSA published letter.
Compliance Checks: Research stage for ONS Health Index.
Rapid reviews: Finalising findings and recommendations for **Ambulance Performance statistics** in Scotland.
Systemic Reviews: Further rounds of user engagement, following up on **Adult Social Care and Mental Health** reviews.
Other Reviews: Continuing follow-up of 2021 covid lessons learned review and evidence gathering phase for review of **ONS Covid Infection Survey**.

Business, Trade and International Development

Assessments: Analysis phase of our assessment of ONS's **Funded Occupational Pension Schemes UK** statistics we anticipate publishing in July.
Casework: Statement on official statistics on **financial sanctions of Russian banks**, published in May
Compliance Checks: Consistency of exports estimates at industry level between UK Trade and National Accounts sources, published in June **BEIS Business population estimates** – report in August.
Systemic Review: Panel took place in May at **ESCoE's** Conference on **Economic Measurement in Glasgow**

Population and Society

Assessments: Census Outputs for **Census** in NI published, NS designation confirmed. Regulation Committee considering NS designation for E&W by correspondence. Continued conversations with NRS on Scotland's Census international steering group established to advise on quality and methodology.
Casework: Continuing to receive **COVID related deaths statistics** and excess death reporting.
Measuring the population, estimates, migration, census and LFS progressing with ONS and others. User engagement on migration statistics planned for summer.
Compliance checks: NISRA, **Suicide Statistics** in Northern Ireland letter published 26 May. **Scottish Household Survey letter** due for publication.
Data on deaths in desk research phase.
ONS transformation of Migration Statistics Phase two of the review is in initial stages commencing with a review of ONS responses to recommendations made during phase one.

Crime and Security

Assessments: Home Office Police Officer Uplift statistics Draft report shared with Home Office. Going to July Regulation Committee.
Compliance checks: Hate Crime statistics letters published in May.
ONS modern slavery statistics findings shared with ONS. Letter to be drafted. Considering further work.
Rapid Review: Department of Justice NI Safe Community Telephone Survey letter published in June.

Economy

Assessments: ONS Country and Regional Public Sector Finances ONS fulfilled the two requirements in AR 367 - National Statistics status conferred in May.
ONS Regional GDP – On hold following publication of latest estimates in May. ONS working with users to develop methodology. Estimates on revised methodology expected in September.
Systemic Review: Post-Brexit ONS Economic Classifications Proposal going to Regulation Committee on OSR's plans for external scrutiny of economic classification decisions and compliance with National Accounts international accounting standards.

Regulatory Activities Dashboard

June 2022

Authority Board

Data and Methods

Internal work: We have developed a new data science 'data labelling' tool, which can identify statistical content in tweets, which is being used by the regulatory team. We are starting a new project to create a tool that can summarise topics from user interviews or any other regulatory text. Discussions are ongoing regarding procurement of a FullFact tool, to support case work and horizon scanning.

Data in government: We are taking a paper to July Regulation Committee, which outlines intended aims, scope, approach and possible outputs for our work on data sharing and linkage.

Wider reach: We have produced a second version of our guidance for models, which will go to Regulation Committee in July, before being shared with external stakeholders. We plan to publish in August.

Insight

Insight and Evaluation Committee: At our meeting in May we welcomed new Committee members (a statistics producer from ONS and an OSR regulator representative).

The State of the Statistical System Report (SOSS): We are finalising key themes and drafting the report. Our focus is on maximising value to producers. The report will be discussed at Reg Comm in July. Due for publication in July.

Communicating Uncertainty in Statistics: Delayed, but due for publication in July, after SOSS.

The Role of Official Statistics in Policy Evaluation: Blog publication planned for July.

Other: Insight webpage launch planned after website update in August. Internal comms guidance is being developed to aid communicating work under one brand.

Policy & Standards

Alternative release times: We have approved three ARTs since the Code change in May. This [table](#) lists applications.

Designation refresh: We published a [final update on the designation review](#) and outlined plans for implementation of changes. We are developing and testing new messages associated with the designation with communications experts in ONS and other departments. We are developing the material for testing the producer culture tools (including the code maturity model) and continue producer testing of the Quality Grade tool. We have 6 webinars set up with departments about this work.

Voluntary application and wider reach: We held a community of practice virtual event with 25 attendees in May. We are talking with the ONS Integrated Data Service, who are keen to adopt VA. The award for Statistical Excellence in applying TQV is to be given in July. We have a seminar for analysts across government on practical applications of the Code in July

Research

Public Confidence in Official Statistics Survey: We are analysing the PCOS data to explore whether there are any further insights, beyond those published in our [blog](#), of relevance to our work.

Public Perceptions of the Public Good, Collaboration with ADR UK: Data collection began on Thursday 16 June and will conclude on 29 July. We will discuss findings with our external Project Advisory Group in mid-July.

Other: We gave a presentation about OSR and the Research Programme at the Quality in Official Statistics conference in Lithuania, which was very well received. We are recruiting for a Grade 7 Head of Research: applications closed in June.

Cross Cutting Issues

Business planning for 2022/23: We will share the near final version with Regulation Committee for this meeting, after accounting for any Board Comments.

Analytical leadership: We have launched a 6-month seminar series for the Analysis Function. The first, very well-attended session was on Intelligent Transparency. The next session is on practical applications of the Code, on 19 July.

Annual Report and Accounts

Introduction

1. This paper introduces the final draft version of the Annual Report and Accounts, which has been reviewed by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and has been subject to audit by the National Audit Office.
2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to:
 - i. note the significant achievements in delivery over 2021/22, that are set out in the Performance Report;
 - ii. note the improving picture of governance, risk management and control that are set out in the Governance Statement, supported by the moderate opinion from the Head of Internal Audit and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Chair's statement;
 - iii. note the financial performance that is set out in the Resources and Organisation section including the overall underspend position that has been presented to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and Authority Board, via the Integrated Performance Report, during the year; and
 - iv. Authorise the Accounting Officer to sign the Annual Report and Accounts, and provide the final signed version to the National Audit Office for certification, prior to it being laid before Parliament on 14 July.

Background and discussion

Performance

3. The Annual Report and Accounts provides an annual summary of the performance of the UK Statistics Authority, a statement on the governance of the organisation and the detailed statutory financial statements and supporting notes.
4. The 2021/22 version describes an extraordinary period of delivery and success for the organisation including:
 - i. the close out of the Census field work;
 - ii. the early stages of implementation of the Integrated Data Service Programme;
 - iii. the Spending Review and settlement of financial resources for the COVID-19 Infection Survey, sub-national statistics and crime;
 - iv. the transition of the COVID-19 Infection Survey to a digital model;
 - v. the initiation of the next phase of development of economic statistics; and
 - vi. a range of novel and rapidly developed analysis on the pandemic, inequalities, the labour market, prices and the cost of living and the Ukrainian refugee crisis.
5. Underpinning this performance has been a range of ongoing and standing statistical deliveries and outputs describing the economy, society and public health; and a range of strategic thematic outputs such as the findings of the Inclusive Data Task Force, the development of the Sub-National Data Strategy, input into COP26.

Governance

6. The Annual Report and Accounts also sets out a range of improvements in our systems of governance, risk management and control, which have enabled the organisation to become more resilient as its profile and range of deliveries have grown. This is supported by the opinions of the Head of Internal Audit and the Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, which describe the improving context around the organisation's management and oversight.

7. The main driver of this has been collaborative work across the leadership of the organisation, the governance team, led out of the Central Policy Secretariat, and the Portfolio and Risk and Assurance teams, led out of the Finance, Planning and Performance directorate. This has increased the rigour and relevance of the Management Information and risk metrics and discussion within the National Statistics Executive Group and its supporting sub-committees supporting a sustainable improvement in the oversight of the organisation, which we will continue to build on during 2022/23.

Financial performance

8. The report also describes the UK Statistics Authority's financial outturn for the year, which totalled £66 million under expenditure against resource and £2 million against capital for the year in the context of total operational expenditure of over £930 million.
9. This level of underspend is higher than we have delivered in recent years and is sub-optimal. It needs to be considered against the circumstances of delivery during the year, particularly the impact of the pandemic on the perception of risk in the Census and analysis; the successes of the redeployment of Census resources to our wider programmes and the positive outturn in our Census contracts.
10. We are tightly reviewing the financial context and forecasts across the organisation in quarter 1 to ensure that we return to our pre-Census and pre-Pandemic position of our outturn being within 2 per cent of our overall budget for the year.

Conclusion

11. This paper sets out the highlights from the Annual Report and Accounts that will be signed by the National Statistician as Accounting Officer for the UK Statistics Authority after the Board meeting on 30 June.
12. The National Audit Office will then pass the Annual Report and Accounts to the Comptroller and Auditor General for signature, prior to them being laid before Parliament on 14 July.
13. The Board is asked to note the significant achievements across the year and provide final approval of the document prior to signature.

Nick Bateson, Director of Finance, Planning and Performance - 20 June 2022

Introducing the Policy Liaison Unit

Purpose

1. This paper provides a high-level overview of the work of the ONS's Policy Liaison Unit which works flexibly across policy areas and central government departments to understand the needs of policy makers and ensure that decisions are informed by the latest and most relevant ONS evidence and analysis.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to note the role and activities of the Policy Liaison Unit.

Background

3. The ONS's Policy Liaison Unit was informally established in 2020 to help support the response to COVID-19 with ONS data, insight and analysis. The ONS's first 'Policy Liaison Officer' was embedded into the COVID-19 Taskforce allowing the needs of senior decision makers to be relayed instantly to the ONS who have been providing statistical and analytical advice in this space ever since.
4. Two years on, the Policy Liaison Unit has formalised and expanded to a team of four, continuing to operate as the link between the ONS and central government to cover policy areas beyond COVID-19 and maximise the opportunities for ONS data and analysis.
5. The Unit also fulfils a key role in promoting awareness amongst ONS teams of Whitehall decision making structures, ways of working and priorities to ensure that resource and priorities can be appropriately aligned.

Discussion

6. To effectively deliver on its priorities, the Unit works closely with teams across the Cabinet Office, No 10, and wider government. Over the past year the Policy Liaison Unit has helped link ONS data with central decision makers across a wide range of topics including;
 - i. Russian Invasion of Ukraine –By being at the forefront of emerging crises within central government, the PLU helps ensure the ONS is responding quickly and innovatively to issues of national importance. At the onset of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the ONS provided crucial insights on Ukrainian diaspora in the UK and real-time economic impacts of sanctions. This allowed the ONS an early seat at the table to develop our analytical offer in tandem with central Government priorities, including launching the UK Humanitarian Response Insight Survey which is proving a key evidence source on Ukrainian arrivals and the UK's humanitarian response to the invasion.
 - ii. COVID – The Unit has ensured ONS data is fed into key decision-making points in the pandemic. Specifically, tracking the economic and social impacts of the different steps in the roadmap out of lockdown and tracking the emergence of different variants, feeding directly into briefings for the Prime Minister and the Cabinet.
 - iii. Labour Market – ONS labour market monitoring spotted a trend of over 50 year olds leaving the labour market. Engagement with Cabinet Office led to a commission earlier this year for the ONS to deliver the new Over 50s Lifestyle Survey to deliver insight on the motivations and factors behind 50 to 70 year olds leaving the labour market during the pandemic, as well as factors that would encourage their return to the workforce. Working closely with Cabinet Office and other departments, discussions are underway to run another wave of the survey, potentially expanding its reach to cover wider aspects of labour market activity.

- iv. Supply Chains – Working closely with the Cabinet Office Supply Chains Unit, the Policy Liaison Unit supported the development of bespoke analysis and insight for decision makers on key occupations and industries such as HGV drivers and challenges facing the food and beverage sector.
- v. Levelling Up – The Unit has ensured that the Levelling Up Task Force are utilising the full capabilities of ONS data and subnational expertise to inform decision-making. For example, in the run up to the publication of the Levelling Up White Paper, ensuring commitments and targets are evidence based.

Conclusion

- 7. The Policy Liaison Unit continues to explore new opportunities, including closer working with new decision-making structures across Whitehall, as well as ways to be more responsive to the needs of decision makers and involved longer term planning on key topics.

Esther Akleh-Amankwah, Joe Moore and Jacob Seamons, Policy Liaison Unit, 30 June 2022

Integrated Data Service – Public Beta Release and Programme update

Purpose

1. To provide the UK Statistics Authority Board with an update on key elements of the Integrated Data Programme (IDP).

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to note:
 - i. the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) Gateway 0 Assurance Review;
 - ii. plans and implications of Initial Public Beta Release of the Integrated Data Service (IDS); and
 - iii. agreement on IDS branding and logo.

Background

3. Cabinet Committee papers and recently launched *Government’s Digital and Data Strategy* both identify IDS as a core component of data sharing for better decision making and evaluation under Mission 3 sponsored by the National Statistician.

“Will work to make all ‘critical’ data assets available and in use across government through trusted APIs and platforms such as GDX and IDS.”

4. At the time of writing this paper an IPA Gateway 0 review is underway and has not yet concluded – but will have done so by the time of the Board. I will update then.

Discussion

IPA Gateway 0 Assurance Review

5. An IPA Gateway 4 ‘Readiness for Service’ Assurance Review will take place just prior to the Full Public Beta release towards the end of the year and this will assess full-service readiness. In advance of this we agreed to engage with a Gateway 0 ‘Annual’ Review in June 2022 to assess the overall health and progress of the programme.
6. The Senior Responsible Owner and IPA have agreed that the Gateway 0 review would particularly focus on:
 - i. cross-government engagement, buy-in and data access;
 - ii. programme governance, reporting, controls and prioritisation;
 - iii. programme resourcing;
 - iv. programme artifacts;
 - v. tooling selection;
 - vi. security assurance;
 - vii. contract management – suppliers, contractors and advisors;
 - viii. dependencies – accreditation, access to data, sister Programme(s); and
 - ix. transition management from SRS.
7. The Gateway 0 review takes place between 20 and 23 June 2022. The outcome report is expected to be published by mid-July 2022 which will provide an opportunity to address any perceived weaknesses ahead of the Full Public Beta release. Discussions thus far have indicated their interest in the challenges navigating a very aggressive timeline and the critical mass of support from other government departments.

Initial Public Beta Release of IDS

8. The Initial Public Beta (IPB) Release of the Integrated Data Service is scheduled for mid-July 2022. This release builds on the capabilities offered by the New Private Beta release, on 30 April, which saw a move from the Amazon Web Services platform to a

Google Cloud Platform, along with service enhancements, and an increase in data and users.

9. The IPB will bring further enhancements to the technology, security and wider service and enable the capability to be extended to analysts outside of Government. Much of the iteration for IPB will initially be 'behind the scenes', with further drops of functionality and enhancements planned over coming months.

Data

10. Additional data becomes available during Initial Private Beta, including the first of the Integrated Data Assets:
 - i. Public Health Integrated Data Asset;
 - ii. Levelling Up Integrated Data Asset;
 - iii. Job vacancy data;
 - iv. Further Energy Performance Certificate data;
 - v. Annual Business Survey Data; and
 - vi. Population Statistics Data.

Features

11. Features that will be introduced during the Initial Public Beta release include:
 - i. a Metadata catalogue for accredited users;
 - ii. Website v1.0, providing a simplified data catalogue, suitable for public view;
 - iii. Deposit and Donate models technically enabled which are key components of the cross-government multi-cloud technical architecture that IDS is trying to stimulate;
 - iv. improved account management processes and functionality;
 - v. the automated Project Application Process which takes further friction out of the process and leads us towards "bite-sized queries" on government data; and
 - vi. Service Desk Alpha and enhancements to the Service wrap and end-to-end user journey.
12. The enhancements introduced by the Initial Public Beta release will result in a more polished user experience with new website and branding; improvements to the capabilities available and backed by a smoother support service; with greater efficiency through increased automation.
13. Deloitte have now completed their work on the Target Operating Model for the Service which includes org structure proposals for the wider activity needed around user management and growth and the regularising of interactions on data and technical architecture with partners across Government

Strategy and Engagement Update

14. The co-chairs of the Privacy and Consumer Advisory Group have agreed for IDS to be an agenda item at their next meeting (17 June) to connect more widely with other privacy group members. In advance of this, the Programme Director, supported by the Authority Data Protection Officer, met with MedConfidential to provide clarity on programme plans and ambition, and to ensure that IDS's commitment data confidentiality was well understood.
15. The public facing elements of the programme, centering around the brand and web presence, were presented and endorsed at May's IDP Programme Board. Branding will feature in the roll-out of the main public-facing website (we have claimed IDS.GOV.UK) and on the researcher hub – both of which are being readied for Public Beta. An ONS wide launch of the brand will accompany the launch of the Public Beta.
16. We are now increasing the external communications around the Service and are aligning with appropriate messaging alongside Google. Civil Service Live will feature

presentations on the IDS on the 5 July alongside Sir Ian and the IDS will also have a stall at the London event, jointly hosted by Google.

Programme Update

17. Level 0 milestones remain on track for the delivery of critical path activities. However, with limited contingency in the plan, the continued close management of risks and issues remains imperative.
18. Challenges persist around recruitment. An update on IDP resourcing was provided at the May Programme Board, which identified active mitigations including; Prioritisation; Delivery Partner contract; use of Contingent labour; talent schemes; outsourcing. All of these mitigations are currently being utilised, which has enabled the programme to remain on track.
19. Work is ongoing to further strengthen the Programmes approach to Financial Benefits and this will feature in the Full Business Case refresh, which is being drafted to meet a September 2022 submission date.
20. The Programme team are working to ensure readiness for key programme enablers, such as IPA Gateway Reviews; Central Digital and Data Office certification; DEA accreditation; and strategy and planning for future phases of the programme.
21. Overall Delivery confidence remains at AMBER. based on a confidence assessment of readiness for the Initial Private Beta release, alongside acknowledgement of some key risks and challenges associated with the public beta releases.

Alison Pritchard, Deputy National Statistician for Data Capability, June 2022

Bi-annual Authority Strategic Risk update

Purpose

1. This paper provides the Authority Board with an update on the UK Statistics Authority (the Authority) Strategic Risk profile following discussions at the National Statistics Executive Group (NSEG) on 17 May 2022 and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) on 19 May 2022.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Board are invited to:
 - i. note the Strategic Risk exposure scores and narrative on the overall position. With a focus on those currently scoring outside of risk appetite – SR3 ‘Quality Statistics’, SR4 ‘Security: Cyber, Information Management, Physical and Insider’ and SR11 ‘Data Access and Usability’; and
 - ii. note the analysis of the Strategic Risk owned by the National Statistician, overseen by the Authority Board – ‘Independence and Trustworthiness’ and conclude on the proposed risk appetite range and risk score.

Background

3. The latest version of the Strategic Risk profile was signed off by the Authority Board at its November 2021 meeting. At the meeting, the Authority Board requested the addition of a Strategic Risk on ‘Independence and Trustworthiness’, overarching the entire profile – owned by the National Statistician, with oversight by the Authority Board.
4. The Authority Board are kept updated with movements in the strategic risk score on a monthly basis via the Integrated Performance Report.

Discussion

5. The Strategic Risk profile demonstrates the most significant risks to the successful delivery of the Authority Strategy and its statutory objectives, owned by the Authority senior leadership team¹.
6. The development of the entire Strategic Risk profile will continue to be overseen by NSEG – in detail on a quarterly basis and monthly through the Integrated Performance Report (IPR) – alongside updates to every ARAC meeting. The next Authority Board update will be in the Autumn where a refreshed Strategic Risk profile will be shared for challenge and discussion. At the Autumn meeting, the Authority Board will also be asked to review the Authority Risk Appetite ranges to ensure the continued appropriateness of appetite calibration in line with the Government’s Orange Book.²

Strategic Risk – ‘Independence and Trustworthiness’

7. Following the November 2021 addition of the new overarching Strategic Risk, the Chair of ARAC requested a deep dive into its management; this was presented to, and discussed at, the May ARAC meeting. ARAC concurred with the executive recommendation of an ‘Averse’ appetite range and that the exposure score is currently in the middle of that range. The Authority chair appointment process was conducted thoroughly and in line with the correct procedures; there was appropriate challenge on preserving independence and trustworthiness throughout the process. There has also been continued engagement with Parliamentary stakeholders over the last six months

¹ It is worth noting that the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) also maintains an independent risk management process, with an OSR specific risk register regularly discussed at Regulation Committee.

and the 2021 Public Confidence in Official Statistics Survey noted that trust in official statistics remains strong.

Conclusion

8. Three Strategic Risks are currently outside of risk appetite –SR3 ‘Quality Statistics’, SR4 ‘Security’ and SR11 ‘Data Access and Usability’. There has been movement in exposure scores across the Strategic Risk profile, as well as a wide variety of risk management and assurance activity. An updated Strategic Risk Profile will be presented to the Authority Board in the Autumn, where the Board will also be asked to consider the risk appetite calibration.
9. The Board’s views on the risk position across the profile and the overarching Strategic Risk on ‘Independence and Trustworthiness’ will inform the approach to managing the risks in advance of the next update in November.

Nick Bateson, Director of Finance, Planning and Performance and Alex Dunn, Head of Risk and Natalie Tarr, Head of Assurance, 21 June 2022

Public Confidence in Official Statistics 2021

Purpose

1. This paper summarises for the Authority Board the latest report on Public Confidence in Official Statistics (PCOS), commissioned by the Authority and published by NatCen in April.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Authority Board are invited to note the findings of the 2021 Report.

Background

3. The Authority has committed to Parliament to commission externally-run surveys of Public Confidence in Official Statistics on a biennial basis.
4. The survey provides insight into awareness, trust and perceptions of official statistics and the ONS among the public at-large. It is conducted to an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development standard and serves to inform and evaluate the Authority's delivery against our strategy and statutory objective.
5. Previous iterations of the survey have run in 2014, 2016 and 2018, as a module within the larger, face-to-face, British Social Attitudes survey. The COVID-19 pandemic prompted the latest round to be postponed from 2020 and run as a stand-alone push-to-web survey in late 2021.
6. Despite the change in mode, the 2021 survey was designed to allow comparisons with previous surveys where possible. Having made the transition online, we intend to continue with the new mode for the 2023 survey and beyond.

Discussion

7. Trust in ONS and the statistics it produces remains high; 89 per cent said they trust ONS and 87 per cent said they trust ONS statistics. The equivalent figures in 2018 were 88 per cent and 85 per cent. Trust is high regardless of whether people were previously aware of ONS or not. However, trust is higher among those who had heard of ONS (93 per cent) compared with those who had not (73 per cent).
8. Respondents who indicated that they trust ONS statistics were asked their reasons for doing so and could select up to three reasons from a predetermined list. The reason most frequently chosen by respondents was that ONS did not have a vested interest in or manipulate the results (64 per cent). The next most common reason given was that ONS were experts in statistics (57 per cent).
9. From a list of comparator institutions, ONS had the highest level of trust (89 per cent) among respondents, at a similar level to the Bank of England (86 per cent) or the courts (84 per cent). Trust in ONS was much higher than in the British media (23 per cent), Government (42 per cent), or UK Parliament (49 per cent), a finding which is consistent with previous years.
10. Most people also trust ONS with data they might provide to them; 90 per cent of people agreed that personal information provided to ONS would be kept confidential. People who had taken part in surveys were more likely to agree with this (92 per cent) compared with those who had not (87 per cent).
11. With ONS delivering the 2021 Census in England and Wales, the COVID-19 Infection Survey, and producing more detailed health statistics during the pandemic, there were increases in the proportion of people who said they had participated in and used ONS statistics; 78 per cent said they had participated in an ONS survey (up from 57 per cent

in 2018). 44 per cent of people said they had used ONS COVID-19 statistics. They were more commonly used than any of the other statistics asked about, apart from the census.

12. Nearly three-quarters (73 per cent) of the public reported seeing statistics on the news at least several times a week, including around 43 per cent who reported seeing statistics on the news daily. A smaller proportion reported seeing statistics on social media, with 49 per cent reporting they saw statistics on social media at least several times a week. Respondents aged 55-64 and 65+ were the most likely to report seeing statistics daily on the news (both 51 per cent), while 19 per cent of respondents aged 18-34 reported never consuming news at all (about statistics or otherwise).
13. 48 per cent of the public have some or a great deal of knowledge of the Authority or have just heard the name. 41 per cent have at least some knowledge of the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) or had just heard the name. However, there is strong support for their roles. 96 per cent of people agree there should be an independent body to speak out against the misuse of statistics and 94 per cent agree such a body should ensure that statistics are produced free from political interference.
14. The full report is available on the [NatCen website](#).

Conclusion

15. PCOS 2021 provided valuable insight into public attitudes towards statistics. The research revealed high levels of public trust in ONS and in the statistics they produced, as well as strong public support for the work of the Authority and OSR.
16. The Authority have commissioned NatCen to run another survey in 2023, reporting in 2024. Detailed plans for the 2023 survey are under discussion.

Romy Overton-Edwards and Michael Willmott, Central Policy Secretariat, 20 June 2022