

**National Statistician's Data Ethics Advisory  
Committee Correspondence Minute**  
Papers reviewed via correspondence, November 2023

**1. Data rotation and modularisation for the transformed labour force survey  
NSDEC23(21)**

1.1 Katrina Tyrell, Senior Research Officer – Social Surveys, Transformation from the ONS, submitted this item to the committee via correspondence.

1.2 The paper covered the proposal to increase the response to the Transformed Labour Force Survey by using data rotation and modularisation, reducing the length of the questionnaire to reduce the burden on respondents.

1.3 The NSDEC recognised the importance of reducing the burden on participants through an innovative approach to data use.

1.4 The Committee then raised the following points via correspondence:

i The Committee acknowledged the precedent set by other surveys but emphasised the importance of public acceptability to the aims of the project.

ii They suggested banding age groups or using fuzzy matching to reduce disclosure risk.

1.5 The NSDEC acknowledged the public good and importance of the project and provided their support after requesting that assurances to their points be provided to the Secretariat.

1.6

**i Action** – The research team to address the comments made by the NSDEC in paragraph 1.4 and provide assurances to the Secretariat.

**ii Action** - The research team to look into data from similar projects to estimate the risk of data disclosure between waves of the survey.

**iii Action** - The research team to keep the NSDEC updated on future developments in this project.

**2. Considering parental permission for the Child Abuse Prevalence Survey (CAPS) NSDEC(23)23**

2.1 Dani Evans and April Lampard from the ONS Centre for Crime and Justice from the ONS submitted this item to the Committee via correspondence.

2.2 The paper proposes an approach to participant permission for the Child Abuse Prevalence survey pilot scheme. Different elements of this programme have been presented to the NSDEC on previous occasions. The paper proposes that the research is to be carried out in schools with the sole consent of children 13

and up. This differs from the previous planned approach of passive parental permission across all ages below 18. The ethical risks of different approaches to parental permission are outlined in the paper, referencing current UK policies and practices such as the NSPCC's research guidelines, as well as relevant international examples.

2.3 The NSDEC raised the following points via correspondence:

- i The Committee praised the collaborative approach and comprehensive research presented with care in the paper.
- ii Found the proposed pilot scheme to be a reasonable approach to gauge the views of schools, parents, and children.
- iii Acknowledged that the pilot scheme will involve a review of processes and may generate further changes in future.
- iv The Committee requested clarification on the legal position of schools in relation to implementing the survey as proposed.
- v The Committee requested information about what the explanatory material accompanying the survey would contain and underlined the importance of the information provided to child participants and parents to ensure appropriate support.

2.4 The NSDEC acknowledged the public good and importance of the project and provided their support after requesting that assurances to their points be provided to the Secretariat. NSDEC should be consulted as further phases to this work develop in the future.

2.5

- i **Action** – The research team to provide responses and assurances to the Secretariat about the points raised in paragraph 2.3
- ii **Action** – The Committee requested that further phases of the project be brought before NSDEC.

### **3. Update on RIO – Refugee Integration Outcomes Cohort Study – NSDEC(23)24**

3.1 Nicky Rogers, Lead of Longitudinal Design and Methods, Integrated Statistical Design for Population Statistics, from the ONS, submitted this item to the Committee via correspondence.

3.2 This item is the continuation of a pilot study developed with review from NSDEC (the Longitudinal Refugee Cohort Study). The proposed RIO programme relies on data linkage of Census 2021 and administrative data, to follow refugee cohorts and how they integrate into UK society. The researchers sought the committee's advice on topics including public perception and acceptability of data use, inclusion, and engagement queries, and have proposed mitigation strategies for review.

3.3 The NSDEC raised the following points via correspondence:

- i The NSDEC recognised the considerable potential for public good of the research proposed.
- ii The committee emphasised the importance of considering potential data misuse.
- iii Questioned the public acceptability of using administrative data for the purposes of this study.
- iv Underlined the importance of retaining any data generated within the ONS for research use only.
- v Enquired as to whether refugee representative groups have been engaged with to ascertain acceptability.

3.4 The NSDEC acknowledged the public good and importance of the project and requested that assurances to their points be provided to the Secretariat.

3.5

- i Action** – The research team to address comments made by the committee in paragraph 3.3 and provide assurances to the Secretariat for these.
- ii Action** – The research team asked to clarify if refugee representation groups have been consulted on the proposed research.