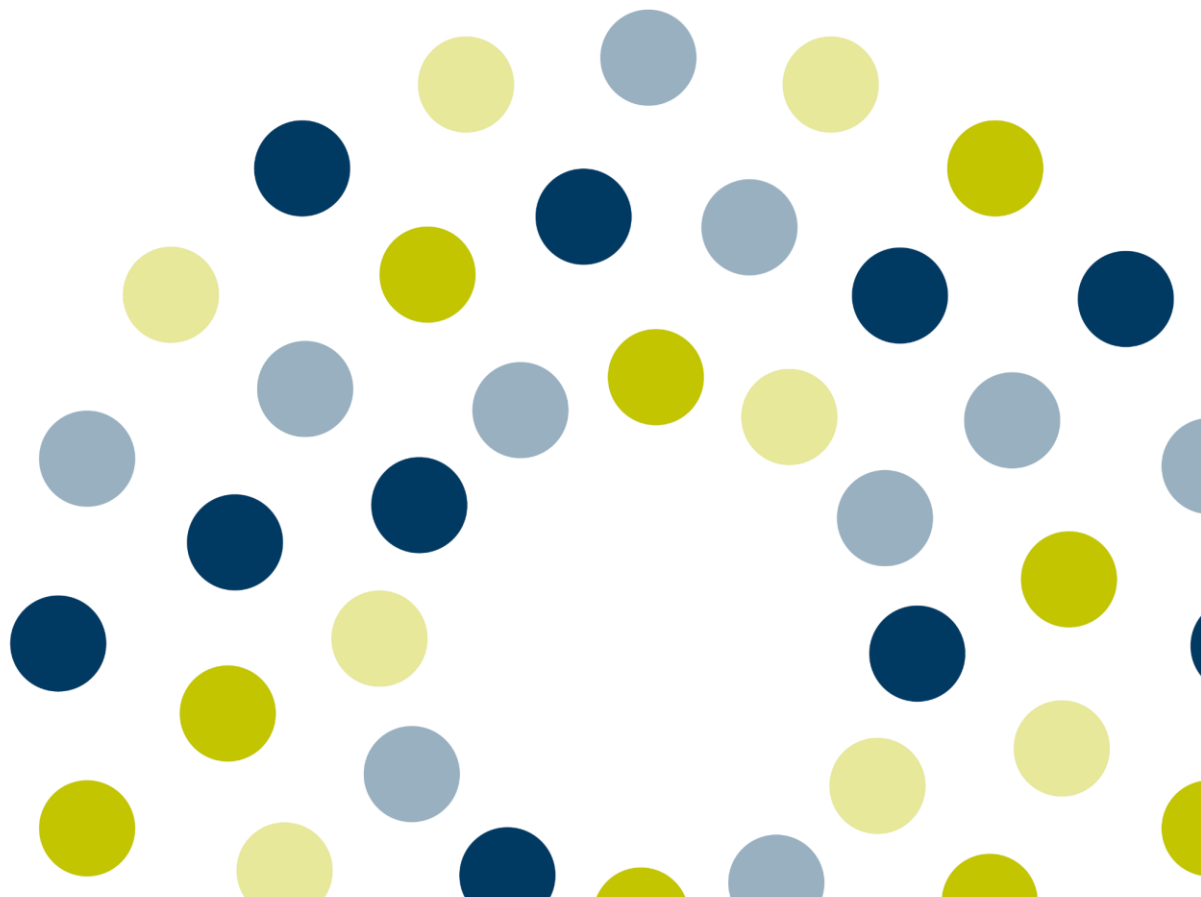


UK Statistics Assembly

Participant pack

Wednesday 22 January 2025



Key information

Attending in person

Getting here

The Assembly event will be hosted on Wednesday 22 January 2025 at 10 Union Street, which is around a 10 minute walk from London Bridge station.

10-18 Union Street
London
SE1 1SZ

Arrival: 09:30 to 10:00 for registration and refreshments

Close: 16:30

The venue is easily accessible by a range of public transport options. A bicycle storage area is available at the venue. For more information, please [visit the 10 Union Street website](#).

If you have any access needs, please email assembly@statistics.gov.uk.

Cloakroom and security

There are cloakroom facilities available at the venue. This will not be monitored by the UK Statistics Assembly team. Personal possessions are left at owners' risk.

WiFi

A free Wi-Fi connection will be supplied by the venue.

Photography and filming

The event in London will be broadcast live to registered online attendees.

There will be an official photographer and videographer taking pictures for use on the UK Statistics Authority website and social media. They may also ask for participants' comments to use for evaluation purposes and for use in future Assembly communications materials.

Please sign the GDPR consent form when collecting your name badge at reception to indicate your consent to be filmed or photographed. If you do not consent, you will be given a green-coloured lanyard. Please notify a member of the UK Statistics Assembly team at any point throughout the day should you wish to withdraw your consent.

Catering

Lunch and refreshments will be provided during the day. We have passed on information to the venue regarding participants' dietary requirements. They have assured us they keep a clean kitchen but cannot guarantee that the food they supply will not have trace levels of allergens. If you are likely to be affected by trace levels of allergens, we advise you source your own food for your own safety.

Participating online

Online participation for all sessions is available to attendees through Microsoft Teams.

Start: 10:00

Close: 16:30

Please refer to your confirmation email for all access information, which includes links to each of your allocated breakout sessions.

We encourage contributions from online attendees by using the hand raise function on Microsoft Teams. Attendees can also contribute their views on the discussions via Slido, and details will be sent to registered participants.

Other information

Social media

If posting on social media, you may use the hashtag #UKStatisticsAssembly.

Recording and use of artificial intelligence

We will be recording the sessions and comments made in the rooms and online. These recordings will be distilled into notes by artificial intelligence for the purposes of producing the report following the Assembly. The recordings themselves will not be published nor comments attributed to individual participants in the report.

Conduct

The UK Statistics Assembly aims to foster an inclusive and respectful environment for all participants.

We kindly ask that all participants contribute to discussions in a constructive manner, providing thoughtful feedback and respecting differing opinions and perspectives. Please join all breakout sessions promptly and engage actively and attentively in discussions, allowing

UK Statistics Assembly

for others to share their thoughts without interruption. Please contribute by raising your hand either in person or online.

If joining online, please do not share online event links with anyone not registered to attend. Please respect the privacy of other participants and do not share their contributions without their express permission.

UK Statistics Authority attendees and other civil servants are covered by rules around political impartiality so cannot comment on political issues and debates.

Get in touch

If you need to get in touch, please email us at assembly@statistics.gov.uk.

Overview and aims of the day

The UK Statistics Authority, in partnership with the Royal Statistical Society, is delighted to host users, producers and stakeholders at the first UK Statistics Assembly. The event will be chaired by Professor Cathie Sudlow OBE of the University of Edinburgh.

The formation of the Statistics Assembly is in response to a recommendation in the [Independent Review of the UK Statistics Authority](#) by Professor Denise Lievesley CBE.

The Assembly's goal is to discuss user needs and gaps and the challenges and opportunities confronting the system. It will provide advice on the future priorities for the UK statistical system. It will also identify opportunities for those outside the official system to align for common benefit.

The Assembly marks an exciting and unique opportunity for diverse voices and views to be heard, including from central, local and devolved governments, business and industry, academia, civil society and charities. Establishing a regular Assembly is one part of our work to strengthen inclusive and sustained user engagement across the system.

This Assembly is the first of its kind; there is no off-the-shelf template for an event of this sort, and we are pleased to be pioneering this new approach for engaging with our statistical community. To ensure that the Assembly design and planning reflected a range of external views and the UK Statistics Authority benefited from the advice, experience and independence of others, an Assembly Delivery Group was established. Organisations represented on the group are:

- [Academy of Social Sciences](#)
- [British Chambers of Commerce](#)
- [Government Statistical Service](#)
- [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#)
- [National Statistician's Expert User Advisory Committee](#) representatives
- [Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#)
- [Office for Statistics Regulation](#)
- [Royal Statistical Society](#)
- [Scottish Government](#)
- [UK Research and Innovation](#)
- [UK Statistics Authority](#)
- [Welsh Government](#)
- [Westmorland and Furness Council](#)

Ahead of the event, a call for contributions ran for eight weeks between September and November 2024. This took the form of a short questionnaire. It asked for:

- topic and cross-cutting theme discussion preferences
- suggestions for agenda discussion items and presenters
- examples of statistical and data priorities, gaps, and public and user needs

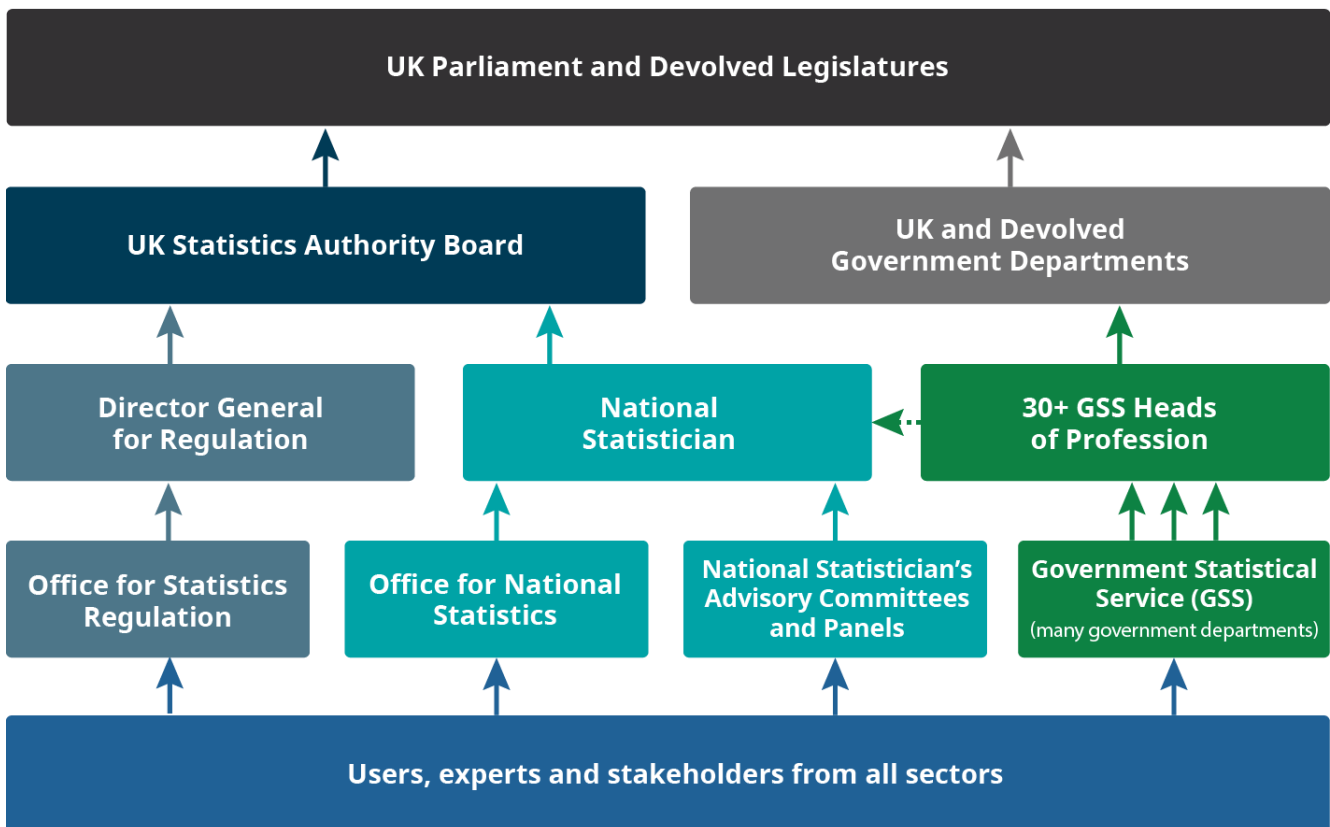
In collaboration with the Assembly Delivery Group, the call for contribution submissions were used to develop a comprehensive agenda that facilitates participation and enables the range of views to be captured at the event. It is designed based on the indicated preferences, as well as the detailed qualitative evidence, from the call for contributions and further feedback.

See further information about the call for contributions on [the UK Statistics Authority consultation and engagement platform](#).

Summary of the UK statistical system

While the Assembly is a focal point for richer and wider engagement, it complements the UK Statistics Authority’s existing range of user and stakeholder engagement mechanisms, such as our regular programme of advisory groups, panels, consultations, and forums.

The UK statistical system includes those who collect, produce, disseminate, regulate and use official statistics, alongside central bodies that set strategic direction. The following diagram summarises the UK statistical system:



A list of all official statistics producers in the UK can be found on [the UK Statistics Authority website](#).

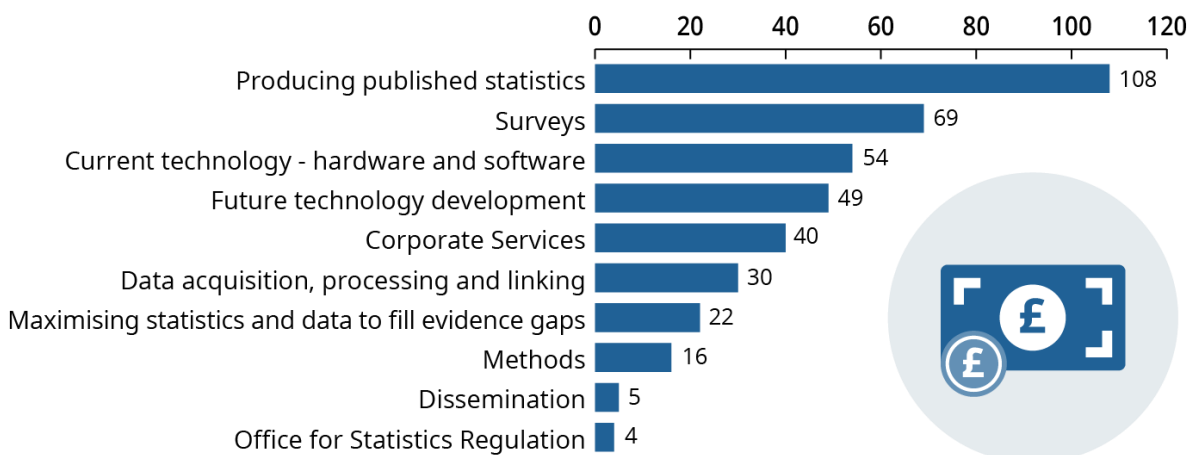
The National Statistician has created a set of advisory committees and panels on specific topics to provide advice and challenge. Further information about each of the advisory committees and panels can be found on [the UK Statistics Authority website](#). In addition to the UK Statistics Authority, there are around 3,000 staff working directly on the production and dissemination of official statistics, across UK and devolved government departments.

For more information about the system, see [the Office for Statistics Regulation’s Guide to the UK Statistical System](#) and the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). The Office for Statistics Regulation has also published a report, [the State of the Statistical System 2024](#), which shares their views on the performance of the statistical system and the challenges facing it, highlights areas of progress and innovation, and sets out their recommendations for advancing the system.

Further supplementary reading includes the UK Statistics Authority’s [Statistics for the Public Good](#) five-year strategy, published June 2020, and the Royal Statistical Society’s [Public Statistics: a vision for meeting society’s needs for statistics in an increasingly data-rich world](#), published June 2024.

For information, the net budget of the UK Statistics Authority is £397m in 2024/25 and is forecast to be spent as set out in the image below.

UK Statistics Authority net budget 2024/25 (£m)



Exhibition stands

The Authority is pleased to welcome exhibitors from a range of organisations at the venue. They will be available throughout the day during breaks and lunch for discussion and questions about their field and current work. Exhibitors include:

- [Administrative Data Research UK](#) and [Smart Data Research UK](#)
- [Office for National Statistics](#)
To gather views on the ONS website content transformation project.
- [Office for Statistics Regulation](#)
To gather views on [the consultation](#) on proposed changes to the Code of Practice for Statistics.
- [UK Statistics Authority](#)
- [Royal Statistical Society](#)

After the event

Insights from this Assembly will be drawn together in a published report by the Chair of the National Statistician's Expert User Advisory Committee and submitted to the UK Statistics Authority Board. It will summarise user priorities and data gaps discussed at the event and recommend how system priorities could be influenced by these.

The report and insights will inform delivery planning for the ONS and other official statistical producers in government departments and public bodies, as well as the Authority's next five-year strategy. Any proposals will need to be considered in the context of constraints to statistics producers' budgets and the wider public finances. It may also identify fresh opportunities for non-official statistics to be used to complement official ones for the public good.

Insights will also be used by the Office for Statistics Regulation to inform changes to the Code of Practice for Statistics.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the event and wider Assembly process, participant feedback will be gathered anecdotally throughout the day, and a short survey will be emailed to participants after the event. Evaluation measures will include whether participants felt able to contribute their views.

The feedback will also inform the design of future Assembly events and engagement activity. Feedback can also be emailed to assembly@statistics.gov.uk.

Agenda

The Assembly agenda has been informed by the call for contributions and has been developed to reflect user priorities. While recognising that not every single topic requested can be covered, it allows a broad range of perspectives and experiences to be discussed. All sessions are available to in-person and online attendees.

Time	Foyer	Plenary	Breakout A	Breakout B	Breakout C	Breakout D	Breakout E
09:30	Registration, tea, coffee and stalls						
10:00 to 10:20		Chair's introductions: Professor Cathie Sudlow OBE Welcome from the hosts: Sir Robert Chote, Chair, UK Statistics Authority and Professor Sir John Aston, President, Royal Statistical Society					
10:20 to 10:25		Plenary 1, What we heard from the call for contributions: Dame Kate Barker, Assembly Delivery Group member					
10:30 to 11:30			Breakout 1: Economic statistics and measuring progress	Breakout 2: Coherence	Breakout 3: Data sourcing quality and methods	Breakout 4: User engagement	Breakout 5: Health disparities
11:30 to 11:50	Refreshment break and stalls						

11:50 to 12:50		Breakout 6: Public sector performance	Breakout 7: Data linkage	Breakout 8: Net zero	Breakout 9: Future of the Census	Breakout 10: Business statistics
12:50 to 13:50	Lunch and stalls					
13:50 to 14:50		Breakout 11: Equalities	Breakout 12: AI and technology	Breakout 13: Crime	Breakout 14: Labour market	Breakout 15: Local and regional data
14:50 to 15:10	Refreshment break and stalls					
15:10 to 15:30		Plenary 2 International Perspectives: Steve MacFeely, Head of Statistics, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; Francesca Kay, Assistant Director General, Central Statistics Office, Ireland; Vipin Arora, US Bureau of Economic Analysis				
15:30 to 16:10		Plenary 3, Feedback from the breakouts: Professor Cathie Sudlow OBE				
16:10 to 16:20		Plenary 4, Next steps: Professor David Hand, Chair, National Statisticians Expert User Advisory Committee				

<p>16:20 to 16:30</p>		<p>Final remarks and Assembly close: Sir Robert Chote and Professor Denise Lievesley</p>	
--------------------------------------	--	---	--

Breakout sessions and framework for discussions

There are 15 themed breakout discussion sessions throughout the day. Those registered for the event in-person or online will have received an email inviting them to sign up for their choices of breakouts, and then have received an email with their allocated sessions. We have endeavored to give participants their session preferences, but should some be oversubscribed, you may be allocated a second preference. Please attend the sessions you have been allocated and arrive promptly to each session.

Sessions are for one hour, with the group discussion framed by a deliberative question. They will be led by a facilitator and three subject discussants offering varying perspective, insight and evidence to open the consideration of the question to the group. There will also be a Government Statistical Service subject lead, official listener-notetaker, and online support in each breakout. Sessions may be recorded and transcribed with the assistance of artificial intelligence. This is only for the purpose of informing the Assembly report, and thus will only be retained for a short period of time.

Discussions will take the following format (with approximate timing):

- short introduction from the facilitator (5 minutes)
- presentation of evidence for the deliberative question from each of the subject discussants (4 minutes per discussant)
- facilitated group discussion (30 minutes)
- summarise (10 minutes)

The whole group discussion will be framed around ‘needs and value’, with topic experts called upon if needed, and should seek to address the following:

- extent of impact for public good: from limited to extensive and coverage (for example, to whole population or specific smaller groups)
- timescale for public benefit: immediate, medium or long term
- type of user benefitted: academia, business, civil society, public sector
- advances the modern statistical system: in the immediate, medium or long term
- feasibility and capability for production by producer type: official statistics system, non-official (via private, charity or academic sectors for example)

Additional views and feedback

Participants will also be able to provide additional views towards the discussion via Slido, which will be captured and fed into the Assembly reporting. Slido details will be sent to all registered participants.

Session information

Breakout session A: 10:30 to 11:30

Breakout 1: Economic statistics and measuring progress

Room: Main hall

Question: What needs to be achieved to ensure the measurement of economic statistics keeps pace with societal and technological changes?

Description: Changes such as digital transformation, evolving work patterns and environmental sustainability all have impacts on the economy and economic statistics.

Facilitator: Dame Kate Barker

Discussants:

- Professor Sir Charlie Bean, Emeritus Professor of Economics, London School of Economics
- Dr Liz Hind, Senior Local Partnerships and Training Officer, Women's Budget Group
- Professor Rebecca Riley, Professor of Practice in Economics at King's Business School, and Director of the Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence

GSS lead: Richard Heys, Deputy Chief Economist, Office for National Statistics

Breakout 2: Coherence

Room: 204

Question: What are the priority topics that need to be coherent between the four UK nations?

Description: Official statistics are produced by different organisations across the four UK nations. Some different data collection approaches are used, and different outputs are produced to meet different user needs in each nation. How do we balance these user needs with the need to conduct analysis of the whole UK and compare parts of it?

Facilitator: Dr Sarah Cumbers, Chief Executive Officer, Royal Statistical Society

Discussants:

- Steve Ellerd-Elliott, Chief Statistician, Department for Work and Pensions
- Dr Philip Wales, Chief Executive and Registrar General, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
- Alistair McAlpine, Chief Statistician, Scottish Government
- Stephanie Howarth, Chief Statistician, Welsh Government

GSS lead: Esther Taylor, Deputy Director, Future Population and Migration Statistics Technical Engagement, Office for National Statistics

Breakout 3: Data sourcing quality and methods

Room: 202/203

Question: Do we need an overall strategy for data sourcing to drive quality and resilience and ensure transparency to users?

Description: The increasing use of administrative data and alternative data including citizens' and private sector data, data modelling and other new approaches means statistics are produced from a range of sources. However, this brings new challenges including assessing and transparently communicating quality, risk and reliability.

Facilitator: Lincoln Blair, Deputy Director, Strategy and Organisational Effectiveness, Office for National Statistics

Discussants:

- Gerry Nicolaas, Director of Methods, The National Centre for Social Research
- Professor Paul Smith, Head of Department, Southampton Statistical Sciences Research Institute, University of Southampton
- Georgina Sturge, Senior Library Clerk, House of Commons Library

GSS leads: Sarah Henry, Director of Methodology and Quality, Office for National Statistics and Fiona James, Director of Data Growth and Operations and Chief Data Officer, Office for National Statistics

Breakout 4: User engagement

Room: 205

Question: How should the statistics system enhance user engagement and communications to better ensure user needs are met?

Description: The Lievesley Review recommended an Assembly as part of a wider need to strengthen engagement and enable users to inform priorities across the UK official statistics system. There is a wide diversity of users and user needs, hence ensuring the official statistics system engages effectively, openly and fairly with all groups is a challenge.

Facilitator: Rob Kent-Smith, Deputy Head, Office for Statistics Regulation

Discussants:

- Ken Roy, Member, Royal Statistical Society National Statistics Advisory Group
- Simon Briscoe, User, Independent
- Juliet Whitworth, Head of Research and Information, Local Government Association

GSS lead: Sarah Moore, Director of Communications, Engagement and Publishing, Office for National Statistics

Breakout 5: Health disparities

Room: 201

Question: How should we improve measuring health disparities across different communities, including health surveillance and monitoring?

Description: Measuring health disparities in the UK is complex due to the interplay of socioeconomic, geographic and demographic factors, and the need for quality, granular data to capture inequalities across diverse communities and regions.

Facilitator: Philippa Bonay, Director for Operations, Office for National Statistics

Discussants:

- Veena Raleigh, Senior Public Health Fellow, The King's Fund
- Leonora Volpe, Health Inequalities Senior Professional Advisor, NHS England
- Rony Arafin, Director of Health Insights, British Heart Foundation

GSS lead: Lucy Vickers, Chief Data Officer and Chief Statistician, Department for Health and Social Care

Breakout session B: 11:50 to 12:50

Breakout 6: Public sector performance

Room: 202/203

Question: What's needed to assess the performance of public services, such as the health service?

Description: Relevant statistics are needed for public service providers, their users and citizens, to objectively assess performance.

Facilitator: Professor David Hand, Chair, National Statisticians Expert User Advisory Committee, UK Statistics Authority

Discussants:

- Stuart Hoddinott, Senior Researcher, Institute for Government
- Ruth Kelly, Chief Insights Officer, National Audit Office
- Sarah Scobie, Deputy Director of Research, Nuffield Trust

GSS leads: Richard Heys, Deputy Chief Economist, Office for National Statistics and Chris Roebuck, Head of Profession for Statistics, NHS England

Breakout 7: Data linkage

UK Statistics Assembly

Room: 201

Question: What are the levers needed to enable better data sharing and linkage? How should the statistics system communicate with and involve the public on the ethical issues around the extent of data sharing and linking?

Description: Sharing existing data across organisations and linking data together enables quicker and more extensive analysis without additional data collection. However, it also raises technical issues on data matching, ease of access and software usage and ethical questions about use of personal data.

Facilitator: Philippa Bonay, Director for Operations, Office for National Statistics

Discussants:

- Sam Smith, Coordinator, medConfidential
- Dr Emma Gordon, Director, ADR UK, Economic and Social Research Council
- Cassie Smith, Head of Legal, Trust and Ethics, HDR UK

GSS lead: Fiona James, Director of Data Growth and Operations and Chief Data Officer, Office for National Statistics

Breakout 8: Net zero

Room: 204

Question: How can we best bring net zero-related official statistics together to tell a coherent and complete story at national and local level?

Description: Understanding the UK's progress towards net zero is likely to be a key requirement in coming years. It is important to ensure the most coherent statistics are produced.

Facilitator: Jill Leyland, Royal Statistical Society

Discussants:

- Cathy Maguire, Head of Assessments, Office for Environmental Protection
- Aidan O'Sullivan, Associate Professor in Energy and Artificial Intelligence, UCL Energy Institute

GSS leads: Jane Chandler, Head of Statistics Profession, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and Ian Townsend, Deputy Director for Environmental Statistics, Office for National Statistics

Breakout 9: Future of the Census

Room: Main hall

Question: What are the essential quality considerations for the future population and migration statistics system to deliver sustainable, timely statistics about the population?

Description: ONS is leading and delivering a programme of research to improve its population and migration statistics. The proposed system, which has administrative data at its core, should enable ONS to produce

UK Statistics Assembly

statistics to meet user needs about the population more frequently and consistently than a traditional census. This is an opportunity to understand and discuss the proposals.

Facilitator: Dr Rita Gardner, Chief Executive, Academy of Social Sciences

Discussants:

- Ruth Studley, Director of Population Transformation, Office for National Statistics
- Dr Philip Wales, Chief Executive and Registrar General, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
- Jon Wroth-Smith, Director of Census Statistics, National Records of Scotland
- Stephanie Howarth, Chief Statistician, Welsh Government
- Professor Oliver Duke-Williams, Professor of Population Information in the Department of Information Studies, University College London
- Emma White, Director of Information Governance, City St George's, University of London

GSS lead: Mary Gregory, Director of Population Statistics, Office for National Statistics

Breakout 10: Business statistics

Room: 205

Question: What data gaps are there in business statistics, for example representation of ethnic minorities, small businesses and more?

Description: Robust business statistics are needed to inform a wealth of policy and plans, in areas such as growth, net zero and green jobs, investment, sector-specific support and supply chain analysis.

Facilitator: David Bharier, Head of Research, British Chambers of Commerce

Discussants:

- Simon Howard, Associate, Better Statistics CIC
- Alex Waddington, Assistant Director, Microeconomics Unit, Competition and Markets Authority
- Anna Leach, Chief Economist, Institute of Directors

GSS leads: Jane Naylor, Head of Statistics Profession, Department for Business and Trade and Kate Davies, Director of Business Surveys, Office for National Statistics

Breakout session C: 13:50 to 14:50

Breakout 11: Equalities

Room: 202/203

Question: What statistics are needed to monitor equalities, in particular ethnicity? What data collection mechanisms are needed to better address representation and diversity?

Description: Equalities monitoring is conducted across a wide range of areas of society such as education, health and business. To be effective, robust and inclusive data collection methods are needed.

UK Statistics Assembly

Facilitator: Lincoln Blair, Deputy Director, Strategy and Organisational Effectiveness, People and Business Services, Office for National Statistics

Discussants:

- Aleks Collingwood, Partnership Insight Manager - Insight and Infrastructure Team, Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- Jabeer Butt, Chief Executive, Race Equality Foundation
- Dr Celestin Okoroji, Co-Director, Just Knowledge

GSS leads: Richard Laux, Head of Statistics Profession, Equalities Hub, Cabinet Office and Fiona Dawe, Deputy Director, Characteristics and Inclusion Division, Office for National Statistics

Breakout 12: AI and technology

Room: Main hall

Question: What are the choices that we should make about the ways in which the UK official statistics system adopts (or does not adopt) AI and other emerging technologies over the coming years?

Description: New data-driven technologies, such as AI, are already impacting on official statistics and users, changing the ways in which statistics are produced, communicated and used. The pace of development and adoption of such technologies is expected to continue to accelerate.

Facilitator: Ben Henshall, Deputy Director, Data Science and AI, No 10

Discussants:

- Donna Phillips, Head of Strategic Analysis, Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner's Office and chair of the Royal Statistical Society's AI Taskforce
- Douglas Cameron, Head of Statistics, Ofcom
- Professor David Spiegelhalter, Emeritus Professor of Statistics in the Centre for Mathematical Sciences, University of Cambridge

GSS lead: Owen Daniel, Deputy Director, Applied Data Science, Office for National Statistics

Breakout 13: Crime

Room: 204

Question: Is there anything a single crime measure could add to better inform decision-makers and the public?

Description: Given the forever changing nature of crime and its impact on victims, official statistics are produced by separate crime types, with a number of programmes looking to improve these measures.

Facilitator: Scott Heald, Director of Data and Digital Innovation and Head of Profession for Statistics in Public Health Scotland and Vice-President for External Affairs, Royal Statistical Society

Discussants:

- Professor Andromachi Tseloni, Professor of Quantitative Criminology, Nottingham Trent University
- Tom Calver, Data Editor, The Times and The Sunday Times
- Dr Elizabeth Webb, Head of Research, Age UK

GSS lead: John Marais, Deputy Director Crime, Income and Wealth Division, Office for National Statistics

Breakout 14: Labour market

Room: 205

Question: How can labour market statistics measure the future labour market by best using surveys, administrative data and other data sources?

Description: Response rates to social surveys are falling internationally raising the discussion about whether mandating survey completion would be effective. This is happening at the same time as new data sources are becoming available and changes to the labour market itself with the growth of the 'gig economy' and concerns about the impact of economic inactivity.

Facilitator: Jill Leyland, Royal Statistical Society

Discussants:

- Professor Jonathan Portes, Professor of Economics, King's College London
- Geoff Tily, Senior Economist, Trades Union Congress
- Nye Cominetti, Principal Economist, Resolution Foundation

GSS lead: Liz McKeown, Director of Economic Statistics Production and Analysis, Office for National Statistics

Breakout 15: Local and regional data

Room: 201

Question: How can national data and statistics benefit local and combined authorities, and local data benefit national policymaking? What does the statistics system need to do to support organisations in achieving this?

Description: Local and combined authorities have a wealth of data that could be used outside their own organisations, while national data and statistical sources offer huge potential for understanding local areas. What changes to systems, culture and support are needed to harness these benefits?

Facilitator: Professor Alison Park, Deputy Executive Chair, Economic and Social Research Council

Discussants:

- Ben Corr, Demography and City Modelling Manager, Greater London Authority
- Pippa Williams, Senior Analyst – Assistant Chief Executive, Westmorland and Furness Council
- Lucy Woodbine, Principal, Planning and Housing Research, Greater Manchester Combined Authority

GSS lead: Becky Tinsley, Deputy Director of ONS Local and Coherence, Office for National Statistics