

## **Stakeholder Advisory Panel on Labour Market Statistics: Minutes 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025**

### **Attendees:**

#### Stakeholder Advisory Panel on Labour Market Statistics Members:

Jonathan Portes (Chair)

Harvey Daniell (Bank of England, Delegate for Huw Pill)

Tom Pybus (HM Treasury, Delegate for Daniel Gallagher)

David Bell (University of Stirling)

Richard Murray (Scottish Government)

Philip Wales (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency)

Jonathan Wadsworth (Royal Holloway, University of London)

Tim Butcher (Low Pay Commission)

Paul Cheston (HMT)

Philip Wales (NISRA)

Alexandra Fitzpatrick (Welsh Government)

#### ONS secretariat

Niamh Davies

#### ONS presenters

Liz McKeown

Heather Bovill

Katy Nicholls

#### ONS colleagues

James Harris

Skevi Pericleous

Melanie Gore

David Freeman

Sarah Ash

## **1. Introduction**

1. Liz McKeown (LM) opened the meeting and thanked panel members for their attendance. LM took attendees through the agenda, which included recapping the activity since the last panel meeting, the decision update, communications and engagements timeline and next steps for the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Transformed Labour Force Survey (TLFS).

2. The chair Jonathan Portes explained to panel members that this was an optional additional session due to the amount of recent activity and Executive Committee and UKSA decisions last week.

## **2. Recap of previous meeting & activity since – Heather Bovill**

1. Heather Bovill (HB) introduced herself as the lead of Labour Market Transformation division at ONS. HB recapped the previous engagement with Labour Market Stakeholder Advisory Panel back in January. The group covered Labour Force Survey (LFS) bias analysis (which will be brought to the Stakeholder Advisory Panel again on 30<sup>th</sup> April), LMX testing, integrated survey design and the TLFS measures of success. Members were thanked for all their detailed feedback which fed into the TLFS technical report that formed a key part of evidence taken to the Executive Committee and UKSA Boards for decision making purposes.

2. HB presented members with the long list of options considered for the future of the TLFS design in the decision making. The options comprised two LFS only options, two options to move to TLFS post the new design and two options to move to TLFS now and the new design later.

## **3. TLFS Decision Update – Heather Bovill**

1. Heather Bovill (HB) announced to members that the Executive Committee and UKSA board met last week and have endorsed the option to continue to parallel run both LFS and TLFS whilst planned TLFS design changes are implemented.

2. HB detailed the design of the 'Core' and 'Plus' surveys; a short longitudinal core to collect core labour market variables and a cross sectional plus survey to collect the wider socioeconomic household and local data from respondents. The design elements of this survey will bring benefits such as knock to nudge to target underrepresented households, data rotation to reduce respondent burden and improvements to the collection of complex variables such as SIC/SOC. The new

design is expected to reduce respondent burden; improve completion rates, representativeness and data quality. HB noted that this design has been assured and endorsed by users and academic experts.

3. HB explained the indicative timescales to TLFS transition as ONS proceeds to continue the parallel run of both LFS and TLFS whilst planned TLFS design changes are implemented. HB noted transition timing will be data-led and could be in 2027 if our assessment or user needs require more data to be collected and assessed.

4. Users were supportive of the outcomes of the Executive Committee and UKSA Board decisions to continue to parallel run both LFS and TLFS whilst planned TLFS design changes are implemented – subject to ongoing financial discussions. Users emphasized the importance of having robust quality measures to assess data quality. ONS confirmed they would re-circulate the TLFS Measures of Success to panel members. Panel members also expressed interest in incorporating other datasets (e.g. annual) into the indicative timelines and the ONS confirmed there is ongoing work to integrate other datasets into the timelines and future workplans. ONS confirmed that a UK data and non-Labour Market ‘Plus’ updates will be covered in the next panel meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

5. Following an invitation from the Chair, the panel discussed the possibility of publication of TLFS data prior to transition and were broadly supportive, whilst acknowledging the need to balance transparency and data confidence.

#### **4. Communications and Engagement**

1. Katy Nicholls (KN) introduced herself and presented the panel with the indicative timeline for communications and engagement following the Executive Committee and UKSA Board decisions. These include publishing a transformation update article, streamlined technical design report, an external webinar, and publishing an LFS and workforce jobs coherence article.

#### **5. Next Steps – Heather Bovill**

1. Heather Bovill (HB) took the panel through the next steps on both the TLFS and LFS, highlighting the huge amount of ongoing and planned work to delivery following the decision point.

## **6. AOB & Close – Jonathan Portes/ Liz McKeown**

1. Liz McKeown (LM) thanked panel members for all their feedback and engagement over the last few months, highlighting its importance in the decision-making process. LM encouraged panel members to contact ONS ahead of the next panel meeting if there are any topics or agenda items they wish to be covered.

2. The chair also thanked participants for their valuable contributions and feedback over the last few months. The chair noted that the next meeting will be 30<sup>th</sup> April.