

Stakeholder Advisory Panel on Labour Market Statistics: Minutes September 2025

Attendees:

Panel members in attendance

Jonathan Portes (Chair)

Tom Pybus (HM Treasury, delegate for Daniel Gallagher)

Nye Cominetti (The Resolution Foundation)

Richard Murray (Scottish Government)

Alexandra Fitzpatrick (Welsh Government, delegate for Stephanie Howarth)

Philip Wales (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency)

Tim Butcher (Low Pay Commission)

Rosie Colthorpe (Office for Budget Responsibility)

Chaitra Nagaraja (University of Exeter)

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

Steve Ellerd-Elliott (Department for Work and Pensions)

Andrew Barnard (Cabinet Office, delegate for Steffan Jones)

Jonathan Wadsworth (Royal Holloway College)

David Bell (University of Stirling)

ONS secretariat

Melanie Gore

ONS presenters

David Freeman

Heather Bovill

Panel presenter

Nye Cominetti (The Resolution Foundation)

ONS colleagues

Liz McKeown

Tom Evans

Mary Gregory

Katy Nicholls

Michalina Siemiatkowska

Sarah Ash

1. Introduction

1. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed attendees. He noted the importance of maintaining pace and responsiveness in the TLFS programme.
2. As agreed, following Panel feedback, the Panel will now alternate between shorter online meetings and longer in-person meetings to ensure timely updates.
3. The Chair welcomed Rosie Colthorpe from the OBR to the Panel.

2. Labour Force Survey (LFS): Reweighting – David Freeman

1. David Freeman (DF) provided an update on LFS reweighting. The most recent LFS weighting reflects the 2021-based interim national population projections. A full reweighting is planned, using sub-national projections expected from Wales and Scotland in autumn and Northern Ireland in January.
2. The Panel discussed the implications of using the migrant variant and the challenges posed by unstable migration trends and revisions.
3. The preferred option is to start reweighting when all sub-national population projections are available and pause if TLFS transition occurs.

4. The Panel endorsed this approach and emphasised the importance of clear communication regarding revisions.

3. LFS Quality – David Freeman

1. David Freeman (DF) presented updates on LFS response rates and representativeness.
2. Improvements were noted in most measures. However, short-term trends in LFS employees differ from RTI and workforce jobs data.
3. The Panel discussed the possibility of disaggregated analysis to reconcile differences and ensure accuracy across subgroups.

4. Resolution Foundation Employment Estimates – Nye Cominetti

1. Nye Cominetti (NC) shared the Resolution Foundation's alternative employment estimates, which suggest LFS underestimated employment rates between 2021 and 2024.
2. Their methodology uses HMRC job estimates and population data, with various adjustments.
3. The estimates align well with LFS pre-pandemic and recent data but diverge significantly during the pandemic period.
4. The Panel discussed the potential for ONS to provide a corrected view of employment trends and the importance of linking survey data with administrative sources.

5. Transformed Labour Force Survey (TLFS) Programme Update – Heather Bovill

1. Key developments include the launch of the short Core survey in July and the introduction of in-home supported completion in October.
2. The Household, Socioeconomic and Local project team are conducting a stakeholder engagement exercise to reconfirm requirements and priorities for the TLFS Plus survey dataset.
3. External deep dive sessions on discontinuity, nationality, and NEETs have been conducted as part of the peer review of the TLFS data.
4. An update was provided on the testing of the TLFS design changes due for implementation in January 2026. The Panel agreed data rotation is a priority due to its potential impact on headline estimates.

6. Measures of Success for Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) – Heather Bovill

1. Heather Bovill (HB) presented initial findings on SOC quality.
2. SOC appears to have better coherence and fewer uncodable responses compared to Standard Industrial Classification (SIC). Distributions align well with LFS and Census data.

3. The Panel was asked to review proposed quality measures and provide feedback.
4. Further analysis will be conducted to confirm consistency and address any anomalies.

7. Conclusion

1. Jonathan Portes (JP) concluded the meeting, thanking attendees for their contributions.
2. He emphasised the importance of ongoing updates and stakeholder engagement.
3. The next in-person meeting is scheduled for 20th November, with interim updates to be shared via email.

Please note: these minutes were produced with the assistance of AI