
Director General for Regulation

Norman Caven
Chief Executive
NISRA
McAuley House
2-14 Castle Street
Belfast
BT1 1SA

30 July 2015

Dear Norman,

I am writing to draw your attention to the series of Assessment reports 309 to 312 produced by my regulatory team – *Population Estimates and Projections* – and published today on the UK Statistics Authority web site:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/index.html>

The four reports present the outcome of the regulatory team's re-assessment of population estimates and projections for the UK and its constituent parts, which are produced by the Office for National Statistics, the Welsh Government, National Records of Scotland and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.

As you are aware, population estimates and projections are central to the UK statistical system's infrastructure and the regulatory team found much to celebrate in this re-assessment. The good examples of joint working across the UK provide the opportunity and the platform to ensure the continuing coherence and comparability of these statistics. Producers engage with a large constituency of users using a broad range of methods. However, the regulatory team also identified areas to improve and review, including emerging resource constraints that could limit the ability of producers to build upon these areas of strength and address the recommendation from the recent European peer review of the UK's statistics¹ to ensure coherence and comparability across the UK, over time and between producers.

To ensure these important statistics continue to meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value – and so maintain their National Statistics status – the producer organisations will need to meet the Requirements set out in each of the reports. And in doing so the four producers will need to work together, reflecting the interrelated nature of the statistics.

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/64157/4372828/2015-UK-report/d44f7d3f-64c1-4450-8a37-bfad8542607>

Looking to the future, producers need to be far-sighted to counter the challenges of reducing resources and benefit from the opportunities presented by administrative data and census replacement. We believe that it is vital that the statistics can continue to flourish, and meet user need, while the longer term changes take full effect.

I would be very happy to discuss this with you further should you find that helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Humpherson', written in a cursive style.

Ed Humpherson