

Population and Public Policy: The Year Ahead 2019/20

“From health to housing, life expectancy to loneliness, environment to earnings, and much more, the Population and Public Policy (PPP) team at the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shine a light on society for decision making from citizens to the heart of Government.

Earlier this year, we launched our [Quarterly Review](#), making it easier for users to find the analysis we have done. But users have also told us that they often don't know what is coming and how to get involved. This Year Ahead publication sets out our high-level vision for the future and what's coming up so you can get involved in the issues we are working on.

These documents show that we have achieved much. Alongside improvements to our main migration and crime products, we have provided new insights into loneliness, deaths of homeless people and high streets; made our statistics easier to navigate and introduced new cross-cutting products covering key issues such as the experiences of young people and the impact of the ageing society.

But there is much more to do.

Our analytical priorities are to provide better statistics with greater impact on the core issues facing society such as migration, equalities, inclusion, housing and the characteristics of thriving towns. We will continue to improve our publications, their impact and reach to ensure decision-makers can easily find and use our statistics.

Some of the ambitions for 2019 and 2020 will help shape the system of population and migration statistics for years to come. We are undertaking the Census dress rehearsal in 2019 to ensure the 2021 Census produces high quality estimates. Alongside this, in 2020, we aim to publish migration and population estimates based on administrative data, integrating where possible into our published headline statistics. This provides a key component in work to make recommendations on the future of population statistics.

Through modernising our systems, we are collecting data more efficiently than ever with over half a million business survey responses now online, and pilots of online social surveys being tested. Alongside this our dedicated team of people collecting data from businesses and citizens day-in, day-out continue to make it as easy as possible for the information to be provided. This brings us full circle, as the greater the impact our statistics have, the more willing respondents are to give us their time.

While this is an exciting year ahead, this document is not intended to be a one-off. We will update every year so users will continue to be able to engage not just in what has been published but what we are working on too.”

Iain Bell, Director General of Population and Public Policy, ONS

Shining a light on society for decision making from citizens to the heart of Government

We will

Produce high-quality, timely and granular statistics and analysis that describe the landscape of the UK covering the topics that matter most

Provide statistics, analysis and insight to address the key issues facing society

Create new outputs and products, using innovative methods and all available sources to fill evidence gaps

By

Engaging with stakeholders, citizens and policy makers to ensure our analysis informs decisions and strengthen the public knowledge through improved communications

Utilising a wider range of data sources enabled by enhanced methods, systems and data collection processes, ensuring value for money

Investing in our people to maintain and develop a diverse and highly skilled workforce able to meet the challenges of a changing data environment

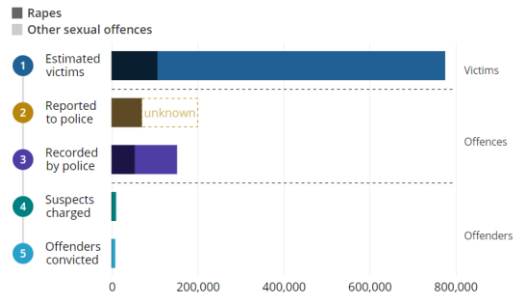
Produce high-quality, timely and granular statistics that describe the landscape of the UK covering the topics that matter most

We produce a range of key statistics within PPP on a regular basis, covering topics including: population, housing, health, crime and many more. Through the use of new data sources and collection techniques, better systems and processes, and improved coherence between sources, we are maximising the opportunity to improve some of our most important statistics.

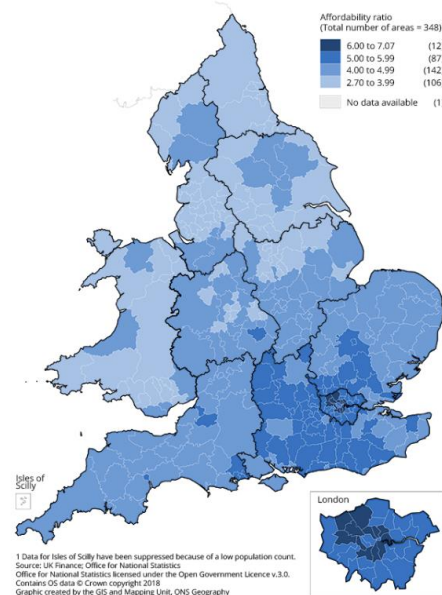
Recent impact:

[Sexual offending: victimisation and the path through the criminal justice system](#)

Sexual offences through the criminal justice system



[First-time buyer housing affordability](#)



Our priorities include:

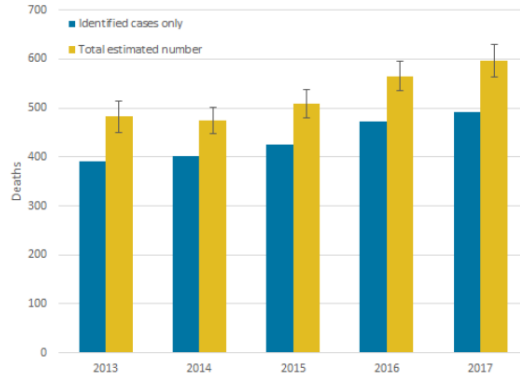
1. Put administrative data at the core of our **population and migration** systems and provide new insights into migration and tourism, health and other areas as we do so.
2. Improve access to **health and social care statistics** and the coherence of them, making it easier to understand what is happening in this complex landscape.
3. Improve and expand our **income, wealth and quality of life statistics**.
4. Continue to improve the way we report **crime statistics** to make it clear to users how to interpret the statistics.
5. Improve the coherence of **housing statistics** across the UK.
6. Improve the accessibility and coherence of our **environmental statistics**.

Provide analysis and insight to address the key issues facing society

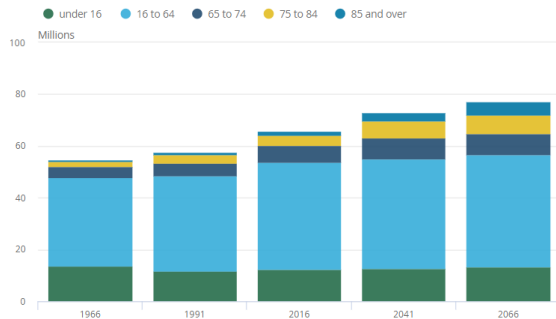
In a fast paced, changing landscape we need to be in-step with the public debate and stimulate new debates. We want to focus on areas of policy priority, to ensure our analysis helps to inform public debate by producing trusted and meaningful statistics. We will use innovative approaches both in our analysis and in how we present, publish and disseminate our insights, and respond at pace as new issues emerge.

Recent impact:

Deaths of homeless people



Living longer: how our population is changing and why it matters



How old are you?
 18 to 21 22 to 29

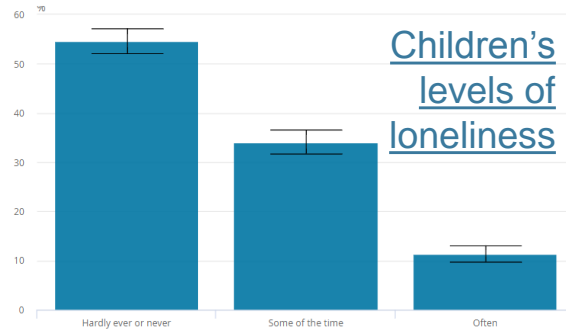
What do you earn before tax?
£ Per year

What is your living situation?

What savings do you have?
£

How much debt do you have? (Not including Student Loans Company debt)
£

How well are you doing compared with other young people?



Children's levels of loneliness

Our priorities include:

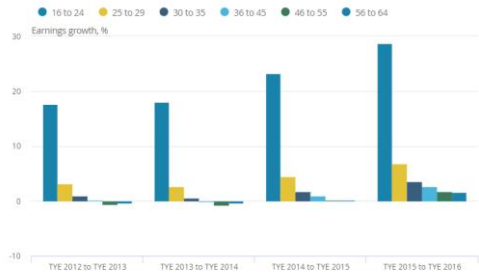
1. Continue to develop our **five centres for public policy** to provide a strong evidence base for the key policy questions facing the UK:
 - **Centre for Ageing and Demography** – assessing the needs of an ageing population
 - **Centre for Equalities and Inclusion** – addressing questions about fairness and equality in society
 - **Centre for Crime and Justice** – improving the understanding of the nature of crime
 - **Centre for Subnational Analysis** – to help local areas design their own policies on local area issues
 - **Centre for International Migration** – understanding migration's significance in our population and economy
2. Provide **new outputs on cross cutting and emerging issues** to support the UK in making key decisions, through being proactive, and not reactive, in our approach, on topics such as adult social care, regional crime, and housing costs.

Create new outputs and products, using innovative methods and all available sources to fill evidence gaps

With the developments in data collection and acquisition taking place across the organisation, we are able to produce new analysis that has previously not been possible due to restrictions in data access or surveys not holding all the answers. We will use the Digital Economy Act (DEA) to acquire new data, and through the use of data science tools, methods and practices, provide new outputs that meet the needs of our users.

Recent impact:

Young people's earnings progression and geographic mobility

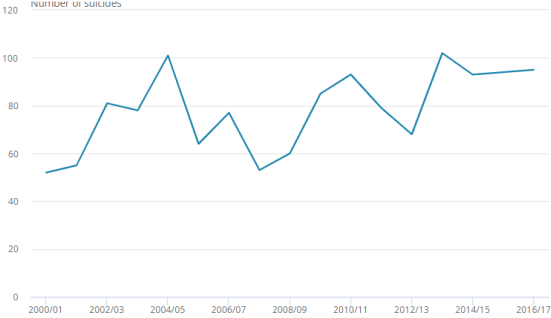


Source: Office for National Statistics and Department for Work and Pensions

Which occupations are at highest risk of being automated?



Estimating suicide among higher education students



How green is your street?

Enter your postcode or click on the map to explore

0% green

Enter your postcode or click on the map to find out how green your street is.

Share

How to use this map

Give us feedback

Our priorities include:

1. Deliver indicators necessary for monitoring the UK's progress against the **Sustainable Development Goals**.
2. Deliver a new set of health projections.
3. Improve understanding of **public service productivity and efficiency**.
4. Develop new metrics of **human capital**.
5. Continue our research into the use of **administrative data to produce population and census statistics** in the future.

Engage with stakeholders, citizens and policy makers to ensure our analysis informs decisions and strengthen the public knowledge through improved communications

We are committed to producing information in a timely and relevant way, but to do this, we need to listen our users to ensure we are producing the analysis that they need. Alongside this, we need to provide clear and consistent messaging in our outputs through improved communication techniques.

Recent impact:

[Media collaboration on crime calculator](#)

The screenshot shows a BBC News article with a red header. Below the header is a navigation bar with 'UK' selected. The main content area features a profile picture of Dominic Casciani, a 'Home affairs correspondent', and the title 'Crime calculator: Find your personal risk of being a victim'. Below the title is a form titled 'Crime: How at risk are you?' with several questions and radio button options.

NEWS
Home UK World Business Politics Tech Science Health Family & Education
UK England N. Ireland Scotland Alba Wales Cymru Local News

Crime calculator: Find your personal risk of being a victim

Dominic Casciani
Home affairs correspondent
@BBCDomc

Crime: How at risk are you?

Are you male or female?
Male Female

How old are you?
16 to 29 30 to 59 60+

Is your home rented or owned?
Please select -

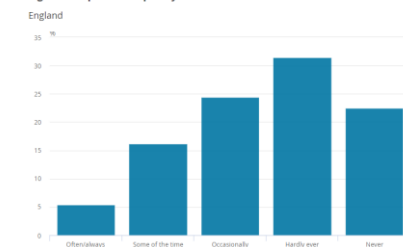
Are you...?
Please select -



Public Policy Forums

[Prime Minister request to develop national measures of loneliness](#)

Figure 1: Reported frequency of loneliness in adults



Source: Community Life Survey, August 2016 to March 2017



A connected society
A strategy for tackling loneliness –
laying the foundations for change



[Chatbot on Automation](#)

The screenshot shows a chatbot conversation. The user asks 'Oh hey!', and the chatbot responds 'Let's chat about job automation.' The user then asks for general facts about automation, and the chatbot provides information from the ONS regarding the risk of automation in the future.

Oh hey!

Let's chat about job automation.

I can help you understand the risk of automation for different roles, or I can share some general facts about automation. Tell me what you're interested in!

Hit me with some general facts

So you want some general facts? Ok, no problem.

ONS crunched the numbers of jobs that are likely to be at risk of automation in future.

About 1.5 million jobs in England (7.4% of roles analysed) have a high risk of automation, while 13 million have a medium risk and 5.5 million have a low risk.

Our priorities include:

1. Open up **new and more direct channels of engagement** with non-traditional stakeholders, such as the Public Policy Forums.
2. Produce **proactive analytical products through horizon-scanning and stakeholder engagement** to provide users with the evidence they need, when they need it.
3. Identify new ways of improving the communications of our findings to ensure **clear understanding of messages**, including the streamlining of our bulletins.
4. Continue to be a **trusted and respected place for analysis** and have a seat at key decision-making tables.
5. Support Cities and Combined Authorities to provide **better data and evidence on local decision making**.

Utilise a wider range of data sources enabled by enhanced methods, systems and data collection processes, ensuring value for money

Through our [Census and Data Collection Transformation Programme](#), the ONS is exploring the use of more administrative and other non-survey source data to help us to understand our society. Surveys will remain an integral part of our work, but we will be transforming these to preserve their value and relevance.

Recent impact:

[Annual assessment of ability to move to an Administrative Data Census in the next decade](#)

Figure 1: Current assessment of ONS's ability to move to an Administrative Data Census

Evaluation Criteria	2016 Assessment	2017 Assessment	2018 Assessment	Expected assessment by 2023	Next steps towards improving RAG status
Access to data	Red	Red/Amber	Amber	Green	New migration and ethnicity data sources later this year
Ability to link	Amber	Amber	Amber	Green	A framework in place to identify and create links across sources in 2019
Ability to meet information needs of users	Population and migration estimates	Amber	Amber	Green	Admin data at the core of population and migration estimates in 2019
	Household and families estimates	Red	Red/Amber	Amber	To be progressed following development in population and migration estimates
	Population and household characteristics	Red	Red/Amber	Amber	Demonstrating potential for multivariate analysis and new topics in 2018-2019
Acceptability to stakeholders	Housing characteristics	Amber	Amber	Green	Research into overcrowding estimates from admin data in 2018
	Value for money	Amber	Amber	Green	Consultation on new admin data population and migration statistics autumn 2018 to early 2019
Value for money	Amber	Amber	Amber	Green	Cost benefit analysis to support recommendation in 2023 about future of the census



Research Outputs: Income from Pay As You Earn (PAYE) and benefits

Figure 1: Percentage of the population with some individual PAYE and benefits income information in the 2016 and 2017 publications of the Income Research Outputs

By age and sex, men and women, aged 16 and over, England and Wales

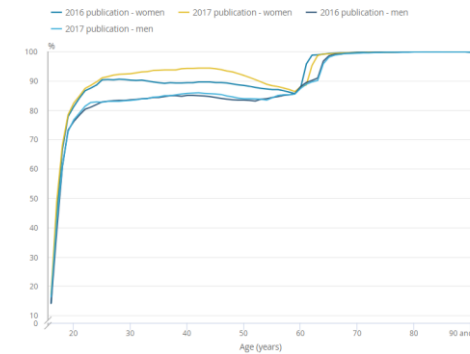
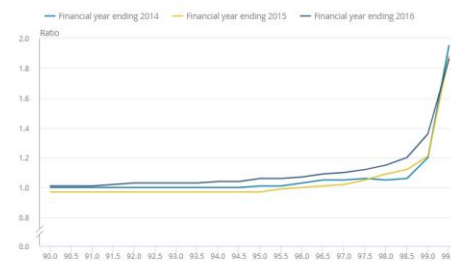


Figure 1: Top earners under-report their income in surveys

Ratio of gross income of tax data to survey data, by quantile, financial year ending 2014 to financial year ending 2016, UK



Source: Office for National Statistics - Living Costs and Food Survey, HM Revenue and Customs - Survey of Personal Incomes

Using tax data to better capture top earners in household income inequality statistics

Our priorities include:

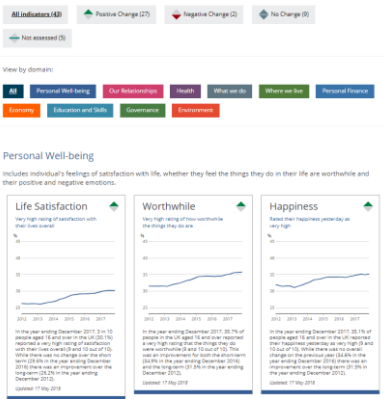
1. Make increased use of **administrative and alternative source data** to get up-to-date and more detailed pictures of important policy areas, including enhancing the statistics from the 2021 Census.
2. Improve the **quality of our surveys**.
3. **Transform our business surveys** to ensure better use of administrative data, rationalising the use of surveys and their sample sizes, migrating these surveys to online collection, moving away from the use of paper.
4. **Transform our social surveys** to be online first where possible, rationalised to ensure information is only collected once, and underpinned by a modern, more efficient data collection operation.
5. **Integrate our survey data with new data sources** to increase the availability of data to us and allow us to explore new avenues of analysis.
6. Complete the **Census Rehearsal** in Autumn 2019, testing our systems and processes in preparation for the 2021 Census.

Invest in our people to maintain and develop a diverse and highly skilled workforce able to meet the challenges of a changing data environment

Our workforce is instrumental in our ability to deliver this workplan and fully align PPP with “better statistics, better decisions”. We will continue to invest in our staff with training and opportunities, and make PPP an attractive place to work for people with a range of skills and from diverse backgrounds.

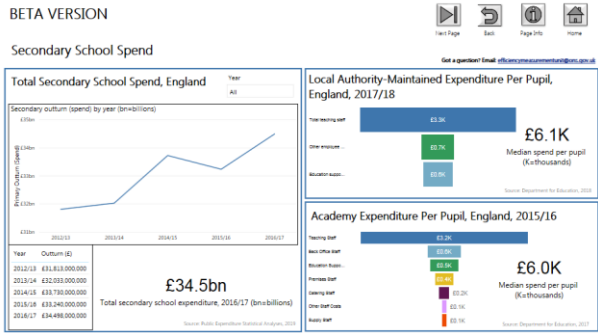
Recent impact:

Software for improved data visualisation



[Public Service data dashboard](#)

[Wellbeing dashboard](#)



[Data Science Accelerator Programme](#)

New and improved coding programme for analysts



Our priorities include:

1. Providing opportunities to our staff to **develop existing and new skills and capabilities** in alignment with the direction of travel of PPP.
2. Ensure our staff have **access to the best systems, data and tools** they need for them to do their jobs effectively.
3. Empower our staff to seek **new areas of development**, both personally and for the business, in order to deliver these priorities.
4. Foster a culture that **promotes diversity and inclusion, opportunity and learning** across our workforce and acknowledge and celebrate success.

Our two annexes provide further information and contact details for our priorities:

- [Annex A: analytical priorities](#)
- [Annex B: Making it easier for respondents to provide us with information](#)

We will update this document on an annual basis, providing an overview of the work we have undertaken against the priorities outlined. We will also inform our users of any new priorities as we progress through our transformation. If you wanted any further information, or if you had any questions, please contact us at ppp.strategy@ons.gov.uk

Whilst this document provides a forward look of our upcoming work, every quarter we produce brief overview of the key findings from a range of analysis we had produced over the last 3 months. If you are interested in receiving our Quarterly Review, please [get in touch here](#).

Likewise, we run regular Public Policy forums which address the need to engage more with our audiences on a range of important topics. If you would like to find out more about the forums we have run, and our upcoming forums please [get in touch here](#).