

Progress with transformation of the Labour Force Survey

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at the UKDS Annual LFS/APS User Conference

23 May 2024

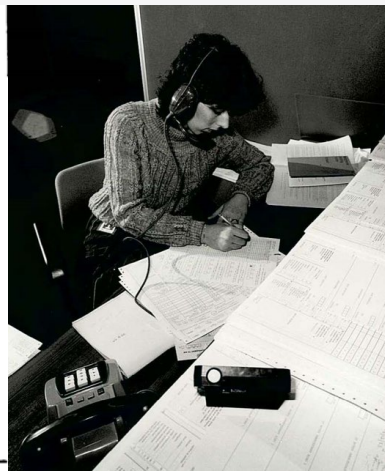


The long history of labour market statistics

- The Labour Force Survey has been running in the UK for 50 years
 - Produces regular cross-sectional labour market estimates
 - Enabled a wide variety of articles and analysis about workers and people, their characteristics and circumstances
 - Has evolved to the changing needs and shape of society, developing over time to maintain the usefulness and effectiveness of the survey capability
- ... and the current transformation is the next big step

	HOH(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
FOR PERSONS BORN 1960 OR LATER RING CODE S OPPOSITE AND END INTERVIEW.....	S	S	S	S
6.What is (___) USUAL SITUATION as regards employment: Are you/Is (___)				
<i>PROMPT AS NECESSARY</i> In paid employment, or self employed.....	1	1	1	1
Unemployed actively seeking work...	3	3	3	3
A full time student.....	4	4	4	4
Retired, pensioned (include permanently sick and disabled)....	6	6	6	6
A Housewife (IF NONE OF ABOVE)....	7	7	7	7
Other?.....	8	8	8	8

(SPECIFY)→



Office for National Statistics

Shape Tomorrow

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Please enter your details

Person 1

My First or Given Name

My Middle Names

My Surname or Family Name

My Sex

Male

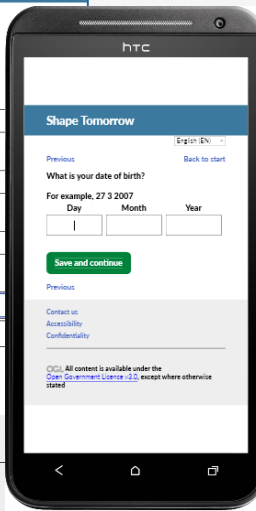
Female

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Objectives of transforming the survey

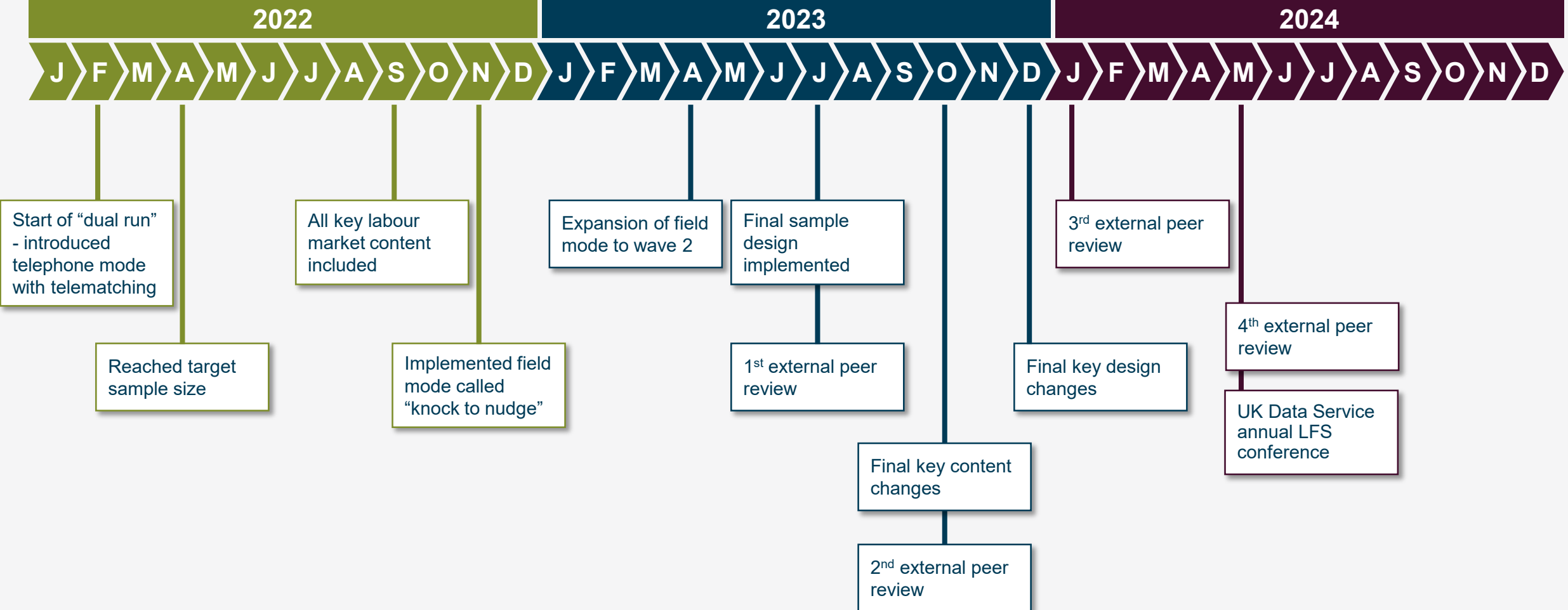


Taking an online-first approach with an adaptive and responsive design to target resources where most efficient to maximise response rates, quality and representativeness through:

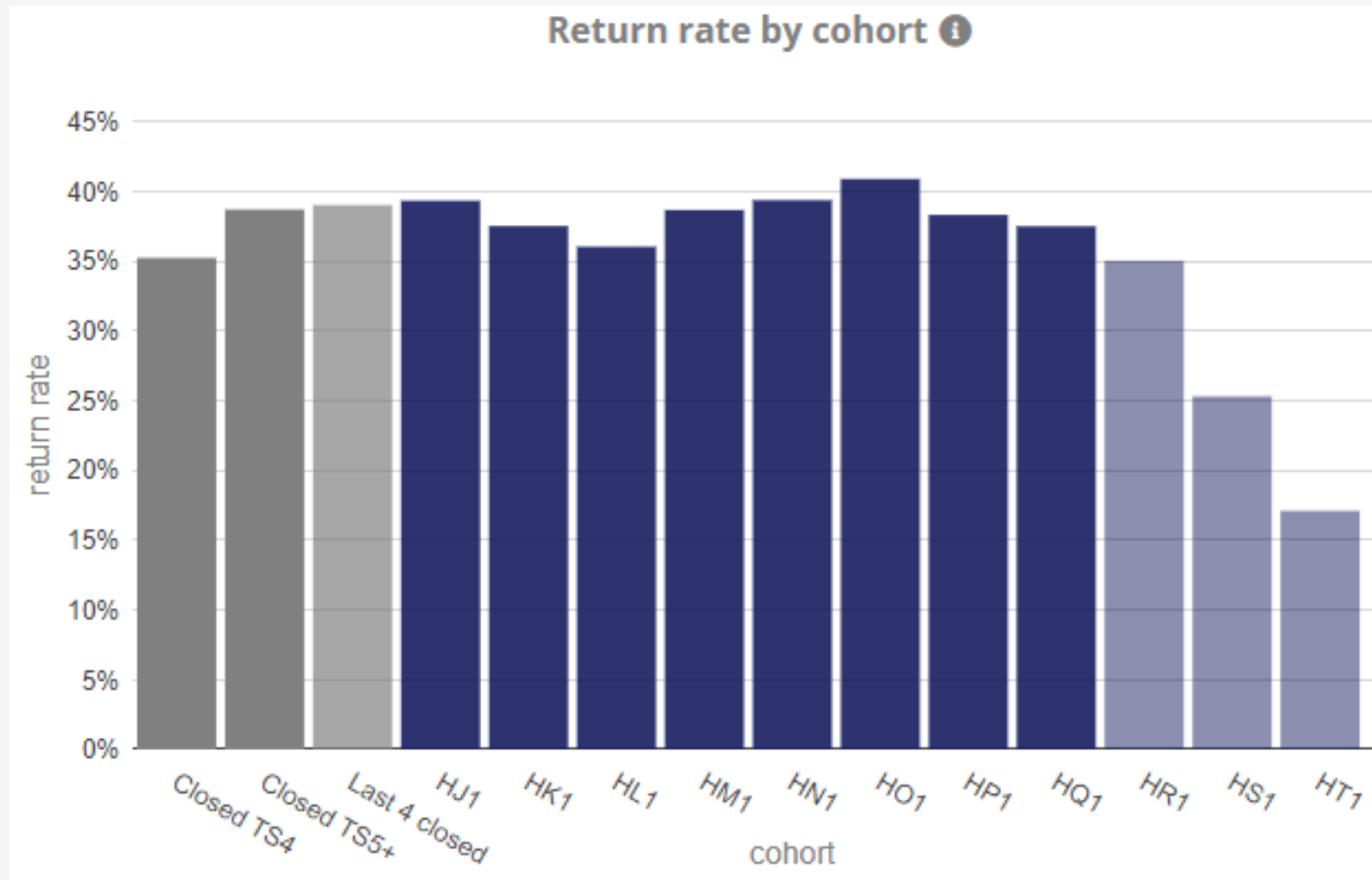
- Larger overall sample size
- More robust processing systems
- Modular design to integrate more question blocks
- More flexible and able to respond faster to change
- Updated and upgraded questions and responses

Future aims include further integration with administrative data, increasing timeliness and better handling of survey content

Transformation timeline (upto May 24)



Latest TLFS return rates



From the last 4 completed cohorts:

- Return rate: 39% (28% full, 11% partial)
- Prop'n of returns by telephone: 7%
- Regional quality: high v low within 1.3
- IMD quality: high v low within 1.6

- = historic rates
- = closed, complete cohorts
- = still being collected

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1. Description of all documents

1. Description of all documents

We have created a suite of guidance documents to help our users familiarise themselves with the Transformed Labour Force Survey (TLFS) and get a better understanding of how it compares with the current Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Annual Population Survey (APS).

As the transformation is still ongoing, these user guides cover aspects of the TLFS that have already been implemented and aspects that will be developed in the near future. We will publish updated versions throughout the transformation once the survey has gone through further quality-assured testing and approaches have been finalised.

Background user guide (PDF, 265.7KB)
 Last updated 5 March 2024
 Provides context for the transformation and high-level information on the design of the survey, including weighting system, imputation method, data quality and dataset dissemination.

Wave 1 issued sample by Local Authority (XLSX, 30.3KB)
 Released 3 July 2023
 Provides the quarterly issued sample size for Wave 1 of the TLFS for each local authority in Great Britain. The figures provided refer to issued addresses, not individuals.

Variable mapping document (XLSX, 306.5KB)
 Last updated 5 March 2024
 Compares all the questionnaire variables currently in the TLFS with those of the existing LFS by highlighting the changes and similarities between them. This document includes updates to the questionnaire up until and including November 2023.

Derivation code for derived variables (XLSX, 121.2KB)
 Released 5 March 2024
 Provides the conditions based on which derived variables are constructed.

Derived variable flow charts (PDF, 325.8KB)
 Released 5 March 2024
 Visualises the conditions based on which derived variables are constructed. This user guide currently only provides flow charts for one of the core derived variables. Further flow charts will be added later in 2024.

Variable metadata (XLSX, 276.4KB)
 Released 3 July 2023
 Provides information including the name, format, length and description about each variable contained in the TLFS microdata files. This file also contains the collection of possible values in response to each variable, and the descriptive labels associated with each value.

Dummy dataset (XLSX, 33.0KB)
 Released 14 November 2022
 Provides the layout and format of the datasets expected to be produced from the TLFS outputs. This table currently includes the questions asked up to early September 2022 and excludes the variables to be implemented by the end of the transformation.

Additional information on the wider transformation work is available in our [Labour market transformation - update on progress and plans](#) releases.

We hope you find this information useful. If you have any comments or questions, please email us at labour.market.transformation@ons.gov.uk.

Background design guide

Office for National Statistics User guidance

Transformed Labour Force Survey background user guide

3 July 2023

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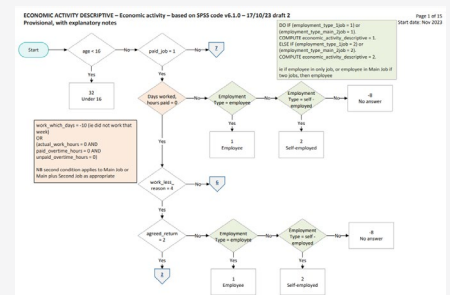
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Sample sizes

Issued wave one sample size of the Transformed Labour Force Survey, addresses per local authority, Great Britain, 2023

One-digit country code	Lower-tier local authority code	Lower-tier local authority name	Total issued sample size (TLFS, number of addresses per quarter, wave one only)	Percentage of the Great Britain issued sample going to this authority
E	E06000001	Hartlepool	181	0.13%
E	E06000002	Stockton-on-Tees	273	0.19%
E	E06000003	Redcar and Cleveland	271	0.19%
E	E06000004	Stockton-on-Tees	374	0.27%
E	E06000005	Darlington	214	0.15%
E	E06000006	Halton	239	0.17%
E	E06000007	Warrington	397	0.29%
E	E06000008	Blackburn with Darwen	254	0.18%
E	E06000009	Blackpool	304	0.22%
E	E06000010	Kingston upon Hull, City of	522	0.37%
E	E06000011	East Riding of Yorkshire	693	0.49%
E	E06000012	North East Lincolnshire	308	0.22%
E	E06000013	North Lincolnshire	319	0.23%
E	E06000014	York	379	0.27%
E	E06000015	Derby	483	0.34%
E	E06000016	Leicestershire	608	0.43%
E	E06000017	Rutland	75	0.05%
E	E06000018	Northampton	677	0.47%

Derivation of variables



Detailed metadata

Specification of each variable contained in TLFS microdata

Name of variable	Position of variable within the dataset	Description of variable	Measurement level	Role	Column width	Alignment	Print format	Write format	Labels applied to values reported in the TLFS microdata
total_said									
case_id									
person_id_m									
sex									1 Male 2 Female
individual_outcome									1 Started 2 Completed 3 Refused 4 Ineligible
initial_access									1 Yes 2 No
sample_country									1 England 2 Scotland 3 Wales 4 Northern Ireland
address_type									1 A previous address from which mail has been redirected 2 Student accommodation rented through a private landlord 3 Miscellaneous housing

Providing TLFS user guidance

Collection of [user guidance](#) about how the survey functions and how to use it effectively

Mapping from old survey to new variables

Transformed Labour Force Survey to (current) LFS variable Mapping Document
 Produced by Social Survey Transformation Division, Office for National Statistics
 14 November 2022

This document contains the first version of an experimental document to provide mapping of variables from the Transformed Labour Force Survey (TLFS) to the current Labour Force Survey (LFS). This also covers the content of the Annual Population Survey, which sources its information from the Labour Force Survey. This information is experimental, indicating that the content is in the testing phase and not yet fully developed. It has been published in order to involve users and stakeholders in its development, and as a means to build in quality at an early stage.

This document is designed to support users attempting to map variables from the TLFS to the LFS. This mapping document has been designed to map variables as accurately as possible to old users, but if any issues are identified please inform us using the email address in the contacts section below.

Transformation of the LFS is currently ongoing, so the information contained in this mapping document applies to the TLFS questionnaire live at time of the mapping document publication. However, the Future Development Stages tab does contain information on the topic areas to be included in future planned TLFS iterations, prior to transition from the current LFS.

This document contains:

- A section for each topic in the published TLFS, containing:
 - The TLFS and LFS variables
 - Whether the variable is on TLFS Core module, TLFS Plus module, or both Core and Plus
 - The question asked and the response values for the TLFS and LFS variables
 - The coverage and frequency for LFS variables
 - An assessment of the match between TLFS and LFS

Future iterations will include:

- A marker to indicate if the TLFS question is a harmonised question, allowing comparison to other surveys
- Coverage and Frequency information for TLFS variables
- The additional topics and questions outlined in the Future Development Stages

The sections contained in this document are:

1. Household variables
2. Individual socio-demographic variables
3. Labour Market
4. Education
5. Travel to Work
6. Income, Incidence & Duration
7. Access, Absence
8. Education
9. Health
10. Social Mobility
11. Health
12. Economic Activity
13. Short-Termiated Business
14. Demographics
15. Culture, Access

Project evaluation

- Delivery timelines
- Objectives and outcomes
- Operability and functionality
- KPIs and quality criteria

Internal review

- Economic analysis teams
- Demographic analysis teams
- Policy analysis teams
- Assurance panels

Assuring the TLFS

Academic review

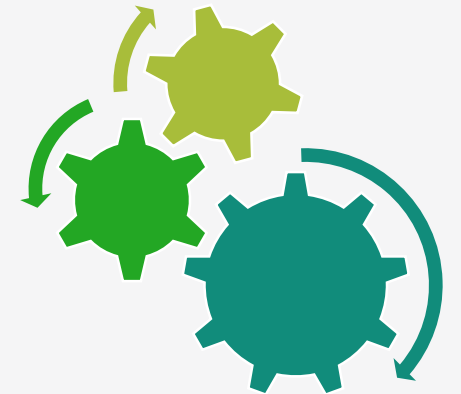
- ONS Fellows
- Methodological review
- Consultants in Universities
- Economic and topic experts

External review

- Devolved administrations
- Other government departments
- Local and regional partners
- Statistical regulatory body

Progressing analysis, evaluation and review

- Evaluating and monitoring levels of bias, attrition and response
- Ensuring continuous production of existing publications
- Investigating discontinuity and continuous time-series production
- Compare coherence of TLFS results with LFS results and other sources, including for regular published bulletin tables
- Compare trend movements against LFS and other indicators, such as a business survey or admin data
- Compare outcomes against observed real-world economic conditions and market trends
- Ongoing external assurance and feedback processes

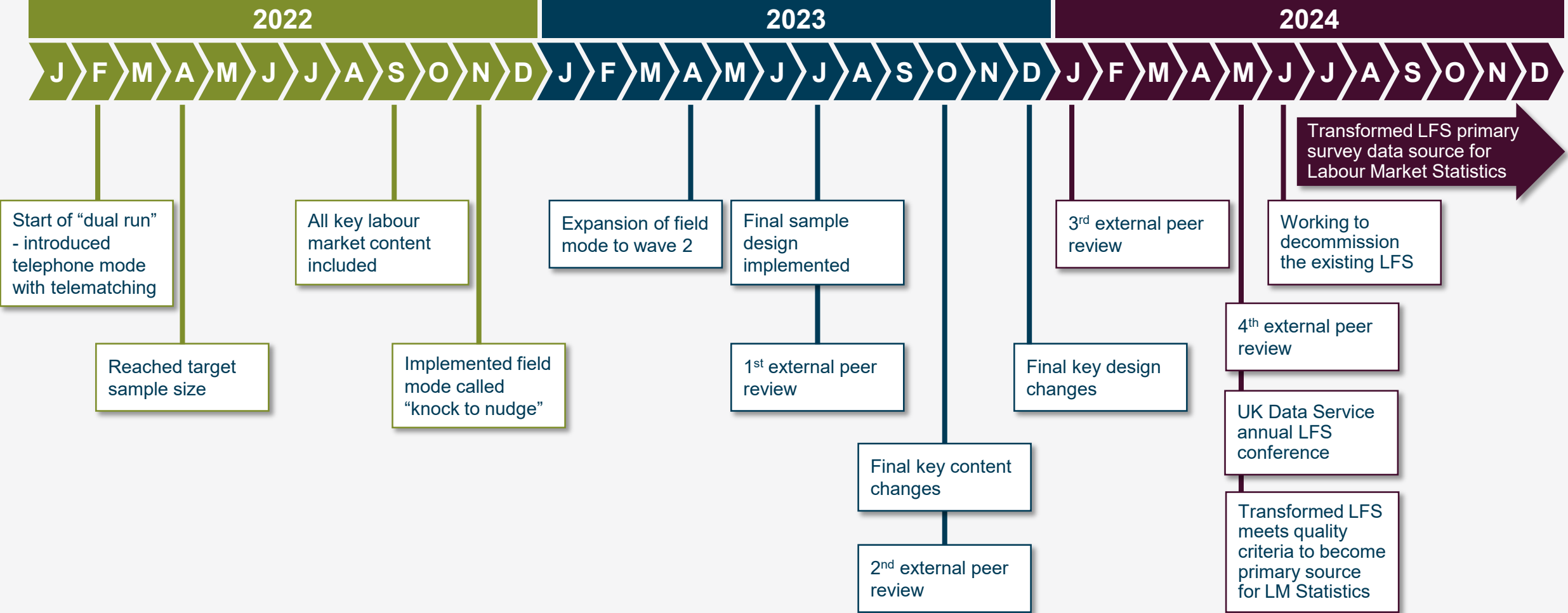


Implementing change

Utilising Transition States with our development and implementation teams:

- TS2 (Feb 22) focused on adding telephone mode
- TS3 (Apr 22) focused on increasing the sample size
- TS4 (Sep 22) focused on adding key content onto the questionnaire
- TS5 (Nov 22) focused on adding fieldwork (knock-to-nudge) mode
- TS6 (Oct 23) and TS7 (Dec 23) delivered changes to some key questions and derivations following analytical feedback
- Currently working on delivering TS8 (Jul 24) with minor question changes
- Planning for future Transition States focusing on design aspects including data rotation, modularisation, and upgrades to the underlying technology

Transformation timeline (as of May 24)



Next steps

- Our latest (29 Apr) [update on progress & plans](#)
- Ongoing engagement with OSR about their recommendations
- Ongoing analysis, feedback and work on improvements
- Reporting upon quality and statistical criteria through project boards and assurance panels, leading toward...
- Decommissioning the current LFS and TLFS becoming the primary source of Labour Market (and other) statistics



For questions, information or updates
about the transformation, contact
labour.market.transformation@ons.gov.uk

Any questions?

