

Transformation of Labour Market statistics

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What I'll cover today

- Our vision for the transformation
- What will be delivered
- What to expect next

Our vision for transforming labour market statistics



The long history of labour market statistics

- We have run the Labour Force Survey in the UK for almost 50 years
- Produce regular cross-sectional labour market estimates
- Enabled a wide variety of articles and analysis about workers, their characteristics and circumstances
- Evolved over time to the changing needs and shape of society
- Continued development to maintain the usefulness and effectiveness of the survey capability

	HOH(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
FOR PERSONS BORN 1960 OR LATER RING CODE S OPPOSITE AND END INTERVIEW.....	5	5	5	5	5
6. What is (___) USUAL SITUATION as regards employment: Are you/Is (___)					
In paid employment, or self employed.....	1	1	1	1	1
<i>PROMPT</i> <i>AS</i> Unemployed actively seeking work...	3	3	3	3	3
<i>NECESSARY</i> A full time student.....	4	4	4	4	4
Retired, pensioned (include permanently sick and disabled)....	6	6	6	6	6
A Housewife (<i>IF NONE OF ABOVE</i>)....	7	7	7	7	7
Other?..... (SPECIFY)→	8	8	8	8	8



Acting upon your feedback

Recognising the various questions, suggestions, issues and challenges our colleagues and you – the users – have raised over the years, the need for:

- **Faster and more frequent outputs** ideally with monthly employment estimates
- **More robust and detailed data** on characteristics of interest
- **More flexible and faster to respond** to changing needs of the day (eg Brexit)
- **Higher quality** data
- **Easier for the public to take part** to improve response rates and reduce respondent burden
- **More sustainable and resilient data collection**, notably during times of uncertainty (eg Covid)

Vision for transformed Labour Market Statistics

ONS Statistical Transformation

- Integrating surveys, census and administrative data
- Deliver statistics for the public good

Produce labour market statistics that are:

- More coherent
- More granular
- More timely
- Responsive to user needs
- Reduce costs and burden on businesses and households

Use administrative data to replace or supplement survey data
(e.g. real-time tax data)

Transform survey data provision

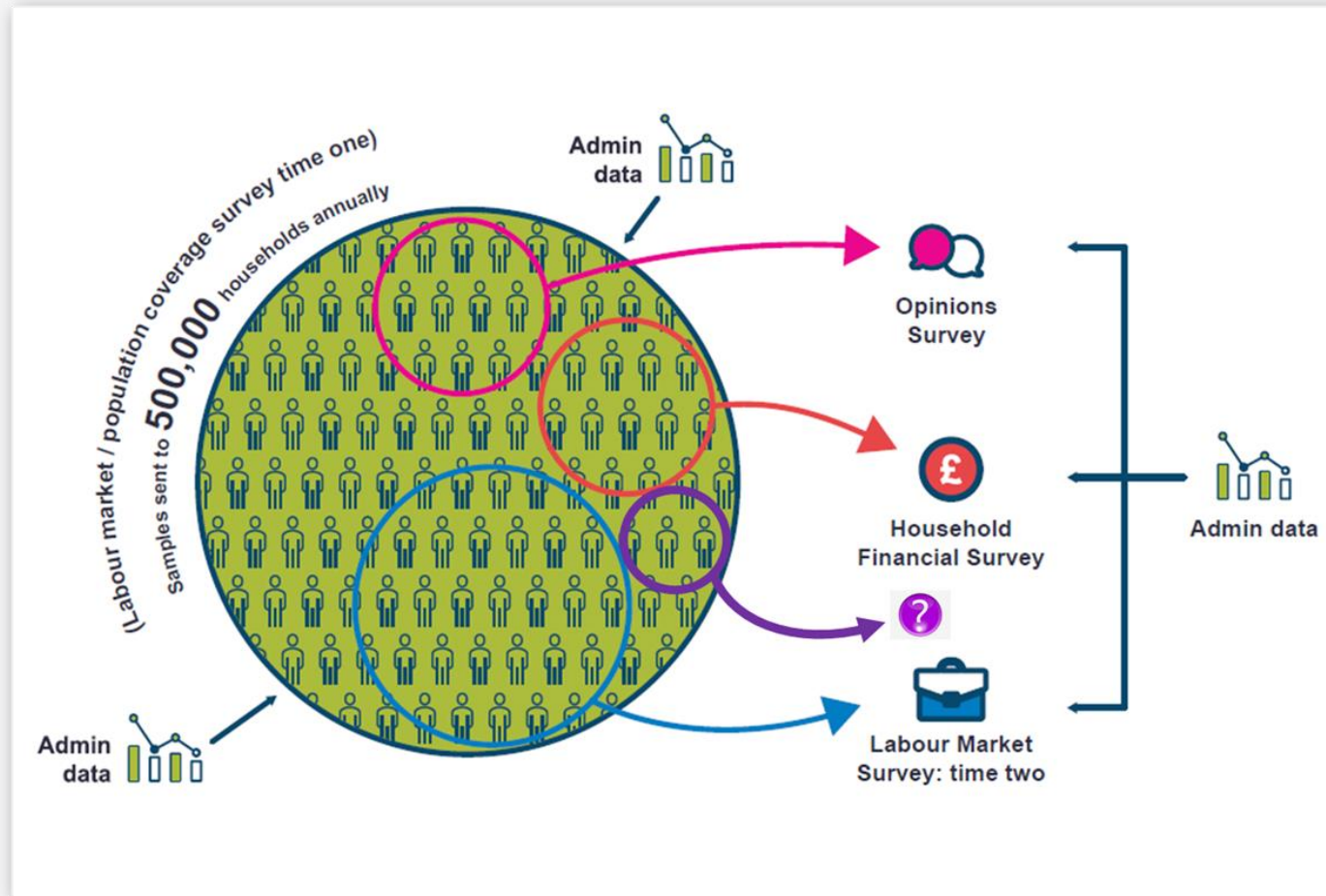
Transforming surveys using responsive design

Taking an online-first responsive design to target resources where needed most, and to improve quality



- 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
- Better value for money
- Improved ability to monitor progress

Our longer-term aim: IPACS



Ultimately building a capability for all social surveys, an Integrated Population and Characteristics Survey, incorporating:

- Stable core system
- Common survey capability
- Dynamic elements and modules
- Meeting survey needs both current (LFS, OPN, HFS, etc) and future (eg levelling up)

What will be delivered



What you will get

- Continuous delivery of labour market data
- Similar datasets as currently received
- Person, household and longitudinal views
- Larger sample size to enable more granular analysis
- Refreshed/updated content of variables with latest definitions to give more robust and detailed data on personal characteristics
- More responsive and adaptable design to changing needs
- Higher quality data...

Key intended quality targets

1. Reducing Bias

- Achieve representative sample
- Focus on both national and local improvements
- Drive to maximise inclusivity
- Minimise variability in response across
 - Regions
 - Index of Multiple of Deprivation
 - Output Area Classification
- Design to achieve proportional samples by age, sex, disability, tenure, ethnicity

2. Reducing Attrition

- Reduce drop-off in response between waves
- Ensure sufficient sample size in wave 5
- Reduce impact of attrition on bias (especially by wave 5)

3. Improving Response

- Sufficient response in each area to meet quality targets
- Increased response must not introduce new bias
- Increased response should reduce:
 - Operational complexity
 - Respondent burden
 - Overall cost

Building capability for the future

Over the course of time, we aim to add more functionality to the survey including:

- Faster response to emerging needs
- Additional modules of questions
- More frequent data
- Better integration into production systems
- New exciting views of data

Questionnaire redevelopment

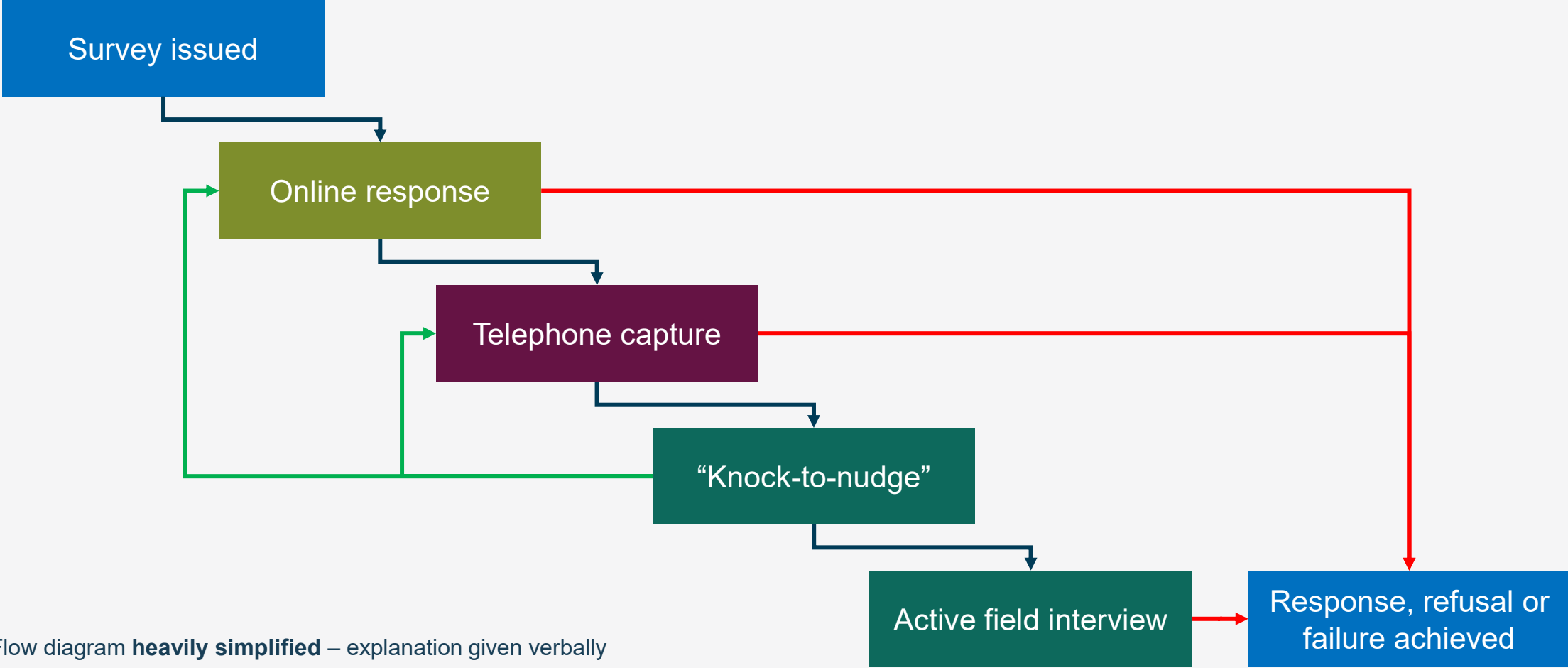
- First principles approach to question design
- Ensuring we meet the user need, not just a variable definition
- Cognitive testing to ensure effectiveness
- Extensive systems and flow testing
- Maintaining consistency with standards and time-series where possible

Current (simplified) data collection flow



Flow diagram heavily simplified – explanation given verbally

Intended (simplified) data collection flow



Flow diagram heavily simplified – explanation given verbally

What to expect next



Delivering the transformation

- Iterative improvements through 2022



- Dual-running period with both surveys live concurrently and active monitoring of progress, effectiveness and quality
- Continued engagement with regulatory bodies (inc. OSR)
- Intention to release indicative results late 2022
- Target that all improvements are in place by Autumn 2023

What's happening with the LFS during this time?

- Continued production of LFS data until at least mid-2023
- No substantive changes to LFS content/design
- Continued maintenance of materials (user guidance, datasets)
- Continued availability of customer contact services
- Archiving of current LFS data and retaining access for future analysis

Taking this journey together

- Continued engagement throughout the process, including:
 - continuing current engagement events
 - feedback exercise in Spring
 - publishing blogs, updates and experimental results
 - engaging in conference events
- Ensuring you have sufficient guidance, materials and information
- Further developing the 50-year legacy of labour market statistics

Make sure you are part of the
engagement, contact
socialsurveys@ons.gov.uk

Any questions?

