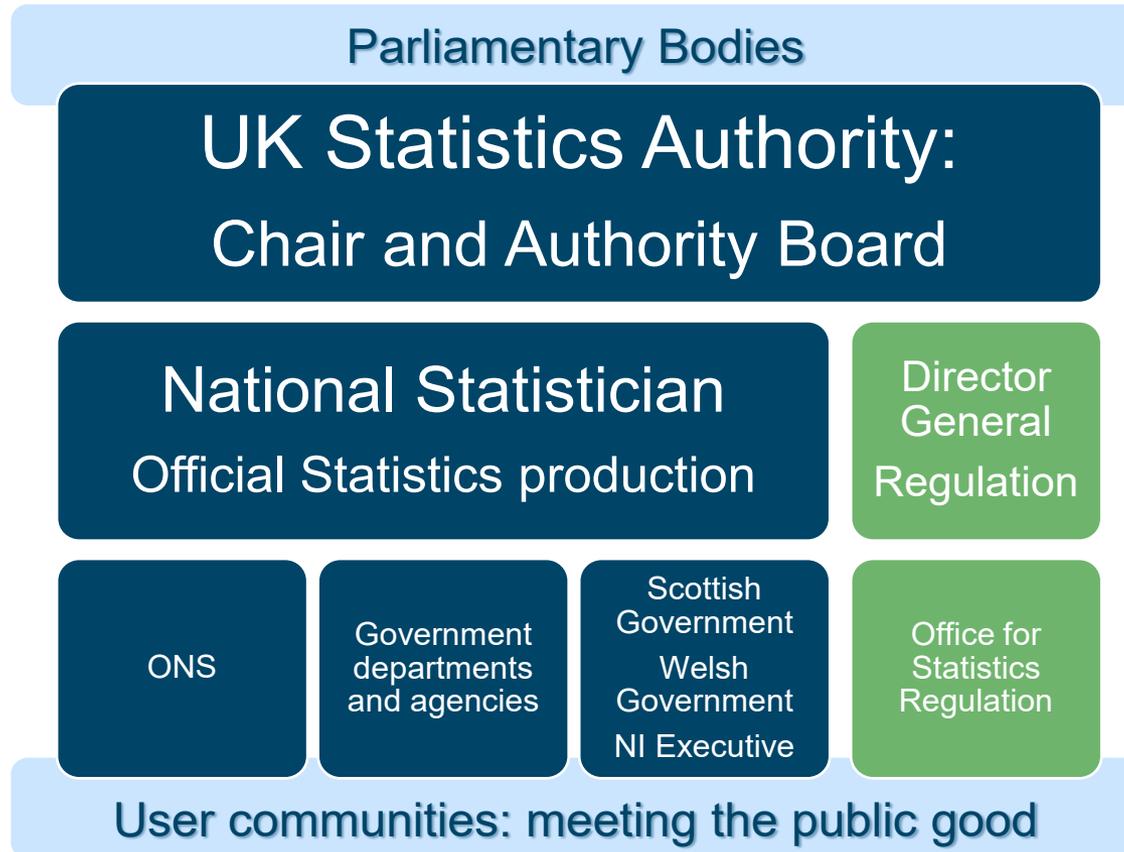


# Systemic Review of Economic Statistics

# Who we are

## UK Statistical System



# Why now?

- Work started in July 2024
  - Common themes from quality assessments of specific economic statistics - for example, survey sample size and design - helpful to look at these themes in a more systemic way.
  - Eight years since Professor Sir Charles Bean undertook a comprehensive review of ONS's economic statistics - appropriate now to review the progress ONS has made in these areas.
  - The economic and social context has of course evolved since the Bean Review - response rates to surveys have fallen, the economy and user needs has continued to change.
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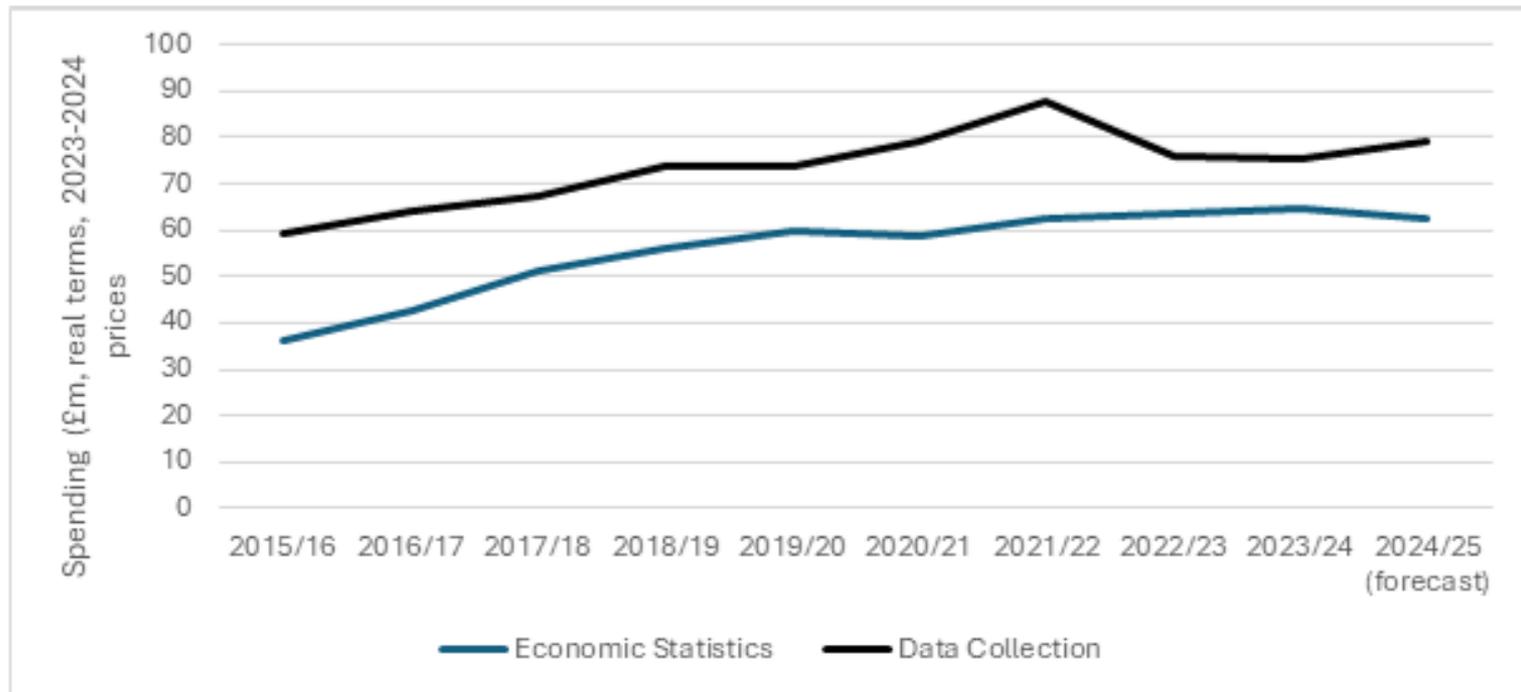
# Approach / Evidence

- OSR's own assessments of economic statistics, consisting of 26 assessments
  - Stakeholder views, based on semi-structured interviews with 25 key stakeholders, and supplemented by evidence from the Statistics Assembly, the Statistics Assembly report, and feedback provided by individual stakeholders in the course of OSR's business
  - ONS staff views, based on focus groups and interviews with around 40 ONS staff, predominantly based in economic statistics and data sources.
  - OSR's analysis of financial and staffing information provided to us by the ONS finance team.
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# Key Context (1)

*Resourcing economic statistics and their data sources has been a consistent challenge.*

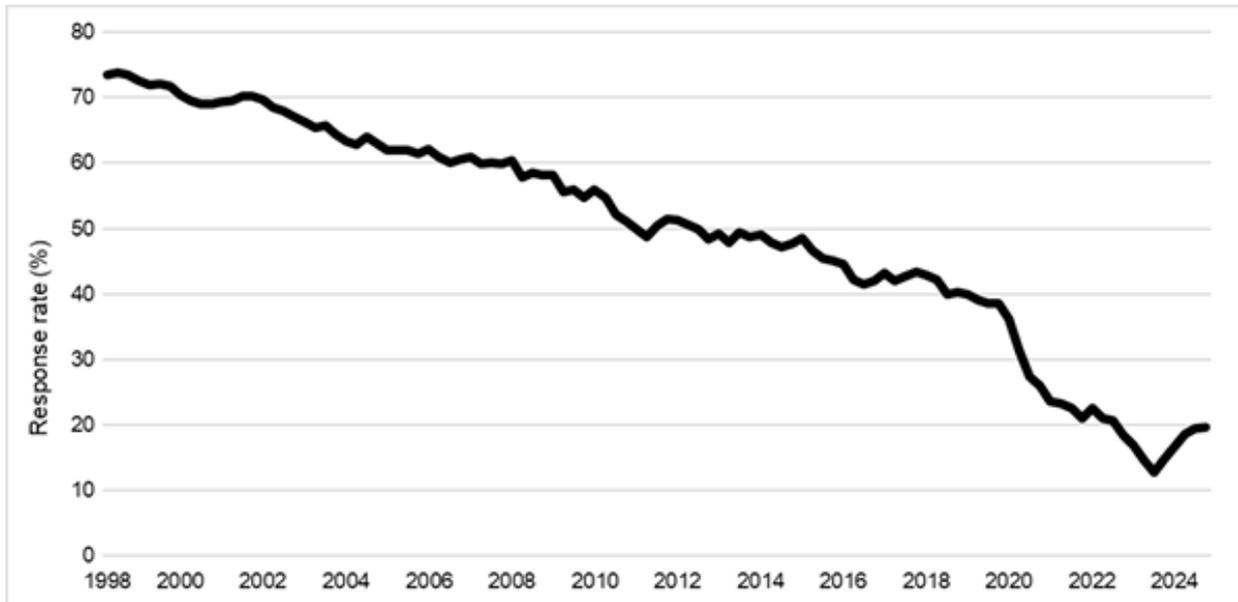
**Chart 3. Economic statistics and associated data collection – expenditure (£m, real terms, 2023/24 prices).**



# Key Context (2)

*Falling response rates to household surveys i) impacts data quality ii) exacerbated by, but also predates, the pandemic*

**Chart A4.1. Response rate for the UK Labour Force Survey.**



# Key findings

- ONS has made significant progress on a range of outputs in its portfolio of economic statistics
  - ONS is strongly supported by many stakeholders.
  - Our regulatory reports highlight common issues with data quality, administrative data and user engagement.
  - Stakeholders would like to see a clearer vision and strategy for economic statistics.
  - Stakeholders expressed widespread concern about the quality of survey data.
  - Making sufficient resources available for its high-priority economic statistics and supporting their data sources has been a consistent challenge.
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# Conclusions

- ONS must fully acknowledge and address declining data quality.
  - Making progress with administrative data is difficult and greater clarity on future role of admin data is needed.
  - Greater strategic clarity of purpose and transparency on prioritisation would help reassure external stakeholders.
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# Action expected from ONS

- **Restoring confidence**, by producing a fully resourced plan to recover its social survey operation and reduce risk in its business survey operation.
  - **Ensuring strategic transparency**, by clearly setting out the core purpose of economic statistics, the costs and benefits of activities, and what can be achieved with available funding, in its business plan, a strategic plan for economic statistics and a strategic plan for data sources.
  - **Focusing on the quality of data inputs**, by implementing a prioritised rolling programme of regular reviews of individual surveys and other data sources
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