

Darren Tierney | Permanent Secretary

Baroness Scott of Needham Market
Chair, Home-based Working Committee
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

26 February 2026

Dear Lady Scott,

As Permanent Secretary of the Office for National Statistics (ONS), I write in response to the Home-based Working Committee's report¹, "*Is working from home working?*", particularly the recommendations made in paragraphs 41 and 185.

ONS Prioritisation

The Committee may be aware that in November 2025, the ONS announced the outcome of a prioritisation exercise and outlined how we intend to deliver trustworthy, independent, and high-quality statistics that underpin the UK's most critical economic and societal decisions². Part of this work involves engaging government departments in relevant areas of economic statistics. The ONS produces statistical outputs that are needed for core economic statistics, and which are closely related to statistical work in other departments. In these areas, we will explore with government stakeholders whether there are opportunities to partner on specific outputs.

Recommendation: The ONS should start collecting and publishing additional data on variable levels of hybrid working, in particular the number of days worked from home per week by hybrid workers. It should collect this data regularly and over time, to allow trends to be measured. (Paragraph 41)

The ONS has been collecting data on hybrid workers through the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN), which provides timely insights on a range of important issues. The survey content is updated regularly to keep pace with changing user requirements, ensuring it remains flexible and responsive. Questions included in the OPN are developed with input from end users and informed by survey design expertise to ensure data needs are met.

In response to the Committee's recommendation, the ONS is engaging with the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) to understand future data needs on hybrid working in the UK and to consider the most appropriate approach for collecting this information. Any continuation or expansion of hybrid working questions on the OPN

¹ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld5901/ldselect/ldhomework/196/196.pdf>

² <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/50395/documents/272671/default/>

would require sponsorship from a Government department and would be designed so they complement, rather than duplicate, other data on this topic collected across government.

Recommendation: The ONS should continue exploring ways to link employer and employee datasets on productivity. If the ONS lacks the capability to develop this data, the Government should stand ready to provide it with the support it needs. (Paragraph 185)

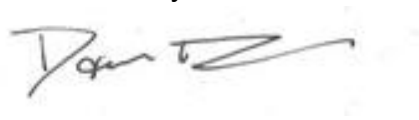
The ONS recognises the significant benefits that a Linked Employer–Employee Data (LEED) infrastructure would bring in improving existing core economic statistics and generating new insights to better understand the labour market and productivity. To this end, we have established a comprehensive work programme to develop LEED, drawing on expertise from both internal and external stakeholders. We have recently reaffirmed our commitment to exploring the further use of administrative data, where we hope this further enhance the quality of our labour market statistics³.

In collaboration with the Economic Statistics Centre of Excellence (ESCoE), the ONS has published a roadmap⁴ outlining the key features of the LEED development. A LEED ‘spine’ of employer-employee identity linkages will allow employees and employers to be tracked together over time. This spine will link Pay As You Earn Real Time Information (PAYE RTI) from HMRC with the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), thereby integrating data on workers—such as pay and limited demographic characteristics—with firm characteristics.

Work is currently underway to implement this spine, with the aim of publishing a technical note and an initial set of exploratory statistics in the second half of this year. Our intention is to progressively augment this spine with relevant survey and administrative data that can provide additional information on employers and employees. This is subject to agreeing data sharing and linking with data owners and developing reliable methodologies for linking and new statistics. This could include productivity measures based on administrative data sources.

We believe the LEED initiative represents a significant step forward in strengthening the evidence base for economic policy and decision making.

Yours sincerely,



Darren Tierney

³<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/labourforcesurveyqualityupdate/september2025>

⁴ [A roadmap for developing a new LEED infrastructure for the UK \(Forth, Bryson, Palmou, June 2025\)](#)