

**Director General for Regulation**

Neil McIvor  
Head of Profession for Statistics  
Department for Work and Pensions  
by email

26 January 2017

Dear Neil

**ASSESSMENT OF DWP STATISTICS ON NATIONAL INSURANCE NUMBERS  
ALLOCATED TO ADULT OVERSEAS NATIONALS**

We have today published our Assessment Report<sup>1</sup> covering DWP's statistics on *National Insurance numbers allocated to adult overseas nationals (NINo Allocations)* and *Nationality at point of NINo registration of DWP working age benefit recipients (NINo Benefit Claimants)*, for compliance against the *Code of Practice for Official Statistics*.

Our judgment is that the statistics published in *NINo Allocations* should have their National Statistics (NS) status temporarily suspended until work to improve their limited supporting guidance and overall public value is undertaken. The report suggests that these improvements should be made quickly due to the high profile nature of these statistics. Once we have confirmed that appropriate actions have been taken by DWP to meet the Requirements of this assessment, we will restore the NS status of the statistics published in *NINo Allocations*, and award NS status to the statistics published in *NINo Benefit Claimants*.

Throughout the assessment we have discussed the role of these statistics in contributing to painting a full picture of patterns of international migration to and from the UK. The contribution of your statisticians to the cross-departmental work in spring 2016 has already led to an increased understanding of the main differences between the ONS's headline long-term migration figures and DWP's NINo statistics in the run up to the EU Referendum.

I am pleased that the National Statistician has committed to lead further cross-departmental work in this area. I have written to him today<sup>2</sup> outlining some expectations in relation to this important work. As ever, I encourage you to play your full part in this work as it progresses. It is because of the continued public interest in this topic more broadly that we will be publishing some further separate reviews of other government migration statistics later this spring.

I am copying this letter to John Pullinger, the National Statistician, Ian Cope at ONS, Mike Jones at DWP, Sean Whellams at HMRC, and David Blunt at the Home Office.

Yours sincerely



Ed Humpherson

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/nino-allocations-to-adult-overseas-nationals>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/correspondence/nino-allocations-to-adult-overseas-nationals>