

# UK Statistics Authority 2017/18 Regulatory Work Programme Priorities

## GLA consultation response

March 2017

The GLA welcomes this opportunity to provide our views on the UK Statistics Authority's 2017/18 Regulatory Work Programme priorities. These datasets all help to inform GLA decision making and planning and it is of huge importance that their production and publication is safeguarded effectively.

### Section 1: Key projects with an existing commitment that will continue into 2017/18

The GLA particularly welcomes the UK Statistics Authority's renewed commitment towards the assessment of regional GVA statistics and measurement of the modern economy. The ongoing development of regional economic statistics is of high concern to the GLA, given the current lack of timely data, and longer time series', at this level. The lack of timely regional GVA data means that official estimates of the size of the output of London's economy can be up to nearly two years out of date. This lack of timely data was particularly troubling during the 2008/09 recession, where analysis of the regional impact of the recession was hindered by a lack of timely, relevant official regional statistics.

The GLA also welcomes the focus on UK trade statistics but, as highlighted in our response to section 2, would also like to use this consultation as an opportunity to encourage the UK Statistics Authority's support for the ongoing development of these statistics at the regional level.

### Section 2: Potential priorities for 2017/18

The following table outlines the GLA's views on the UK Statistics Authority's proposed priorities:

Theme	Project	Our views
Business, Industry, Trade and Energy	Compliance checks: i) UK Trade in Goods statistics (HMRC) and International Trade in Services (ONS) statistics: key inputs to the UK trade estimates	High quality and trustworthy national statistics on regional trade is important to the GLA. The new regionalised estimates of UK service exports are of particular importance to London. Further publications in this area would be highly welcome.
Crime and Justice	Extending our knowledge of statistics on the criminal justice system to increase our awareness of relevant data issues and statistical provision	The GLA would like to stress the importance of this data at a regional level also. Reliable regional crime statistics are particularly useful for our social integration work programme, and further access to these would be desirable.
Culture and Identity	Community Life Survey (DCMS)	The GLA would welcome an assessment of the

		CLS and are meeting separately with DCMS as this is a priority for our work on social integration.
Economy	Economic estimates of the GVA from the creative industries (DCMS)	An assessment of the economic estimates of GVA for the creative industries would be welcome, especially at the regional level.
Economy	Exploitation, interrogation and understanding of administrative data and other large datasets HMRC statistics	Reliable administrative data is an important issue for the GLA, and GLA access to some of this data would be of great use.
Economy	Measurement of developed, regional and local statistics	High quality regional data is hugely important to the GLA. Ensuring that we can trust data published for London is vital, as this data feeds into our planning processes.
Housing, Planning and Local Services	Private Rental Market statistics for England (Valuation Office)	An assessment of the regional breakdown of these statistics would be welcome.
Labour Market and Welfare	Benefit sanctions statistics (DWP)	The GLA would welcome a follow up of previous correspondence in this area. In addition, information relating to the BRES and Workforce Jobs series', in terms of substance, consultation, and the lack of resources, would be useful.
Population	Migration	The GLA is a heavy user of migration statistics, which inform many of our planning and policy decisions, and would therefore welcome a systemic review in this area.
Population	2021 Census	While an assessment/watching brief on the 2021 Census is welcome, the GLA believes that more work on Census outputs is needed.
Travel, Transport and Tourism	Compliance checks (all)	It important to the GLA's work programme that these checks also focus on data at a regional level.
Cross-cutting	Exploring issues of data access and linkage to address policy questions and enable person centred statistics	The GLA would be interested in seeing the outcome of a systemic review on this area and this could help to inform much of our own work in this area.

### Section 3: Proposed additional priorities

The GLA would welcome a greater focus on regional economic statistics at all levels. In particular, as we have highlighted in our responses to a number of consultations by various Government and other agencies, the GLA has long running concerns about the quality and the detail of regional statistics, as well as the time lags currently involved in their production. The lack of a regional breakdown or a regional version of a broad number of UK-wide statistics has hindered analysis of London's economy both within the GLA and by the national government, which given the size of London's economy (representing over 20 per cent of the UK's total output) is detrimental to a detailed analysis and understanding of the UK's economy as a whole. Further, where this data is scarce but is also highly needed has led to considerable time and resources being applied to overcome these short comings.

As the UK devolves more power to different regions/cities, there is an increasing argument to reverse the trend of cutting sample sizes/data collections, and provide the more finely-grained breakdown of the UK that is increasingly required for place-based policy making and analyses.

For cities, the ONS should address those issues faced by city authorities, in needing access to more disclosive datasets. Recent legislation (such as the Digital Economy Bill) has not yet gone far enough to improve this. The National Statistician has said that more could be done to help bodies like the GLA.

Finally, the GLA would also like the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) to explore the ways in which statistics and data can be made available, and to better monitor the impact of this. One example is under the theme of welfare reform. There are insufficient statistics from DWP to allow us to monitor this in London, partly due to way in which Universal Credit is implemented, but also in their refusal to share data on benefits flows. A lack of access to administrative data sources generally, hinders the work of the GLA, and leads to poorer decision making and policy design.