



**intergenerational
foundation**

Fairness for Future Generations

A response to the ONS consultation on statistical products 2013

Who we are...

The [Intergenerational Foundation](#) (IF) researches fairness between current and future generations in the UK, in order to protect the interests of younger and future generations, who are at risk of being ignored by current policy-makers.

Our response...

The research we conduct at IF makes heavy use of a number of ONS data outputs and publications, the existence of which we are extremely thankful for as this work would be virtually impossible without them. While we understand that efficiencies need to be made at the ONS, we think it is especially important to preserve the data outputs contained in the General Lifestyle Survey in their present form to the greatest possible extent.

We conduct a lot of work which looks at pensions and pension policy. For example, this includes our report published in March 2012, [Are government pensions unfair on the younger generation?](#), and another study which we released in 2013 called [Can the UK afford to pay pensions?](#), while we also use pension data as one of the variables in the construction of our [Intergenerational Fairness Index](#), which is produced annually. Therefore, we have a particular interest in the production of data relating to pensions by the ONS.

This is why we would strongly recommend that the outputs of the General Lifestyle Survey which relate to occupational and personal pension scheme membership should be preserved. This is an extremely valuable data resource which is not available from other sources. The importance of personal pension saving is only going to grow over the coming years, so it is important that members of the public and policymakers are as well-equipped as possible with the information which they need to foster a well-informed public debate about these issues. There is widespread acknowledgement that people need to start saving more for their retirement, but it would be impossible to formulate pensions policy in the absence of data on how much people are saving at the moment, which the General Lifestyle Survey provides.

Although it is not strictly within the scope of this consultation, IF also recommends that as much ONS data as possible (especially that pertaining to pension scheme membership and levels of pension saving) is made available broken down by age group. With our ageing population, age is becoming an increasingly important axis of social differentiation, and it would increase the usability of ONS data for stakeholders if it reflected this fact more often.

Conclusion...

In order to help put the interests of younger and future generations at the heart of the work done by the ONS, IF would be willing to discuss any of these ideas further with you.

For more information about the Intergenerational Foundation and its work, please visit www.if.org.uk or contact Liz Emerson, Co-Founder at liz@intergenerational.org.uk.

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