

ONS User Engagement Strategy - Summary of responses to the Consultation

Summary

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) consulted on its User Engagement Strategy between 6 June and 8 September 2010. In the main, the comments received welcomed the strategy and no fundamental changes were proposed.

1. Background

The User engagement strategy sets out how ONS intends moving toward a more flexible approach to our engagement, which adapts to changing relationships and incorporates a wide range of users of our statistics. The user engagement strategy is the first of a number of targeted stakeholder strategies, underpinned by the ONS Stakeholder Framework.

The consultation has been conducted in line with the Government's Code of Practice on Consultation.

ONS welcomed views from any quarter and therefore invited responses from interested parties.

This document summarises the responses received and our response to these.

2. Outcome of Consultation

In total, 44 responses were received. These were mainly from 'Other Organisations'. One respondent requested anonymity.

Table 1: Respondent by Organisation

Type of organisation	No of responses	% of total
Central Government Department	6	14%
Government Agency	1	2%
Local Government	3	7%
Higher/ Further Education	2	5%
NHS	3	7%
Private/ commercial organisation	2	5%
Charity	3	7%
International Organisation	1	2%
Media	0	-
Other	22	51%
Total	43	100%

A full list of responding organisations is shown below.

- Experian UK
- Eurostat
- Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)
- Manchester University
- Tullett Prebon
- North East Research & Information Partnership (NERIP)
- Private individual
- Equality South West
- Bank of England (BoE)
- The Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations (CEMVO)
- Crime & Justice Statistics Network (CJSN)
- Regional Observatories
- Tees Valley Unlimited
- Ordnance Survey
- Local Government Association Analysis and Research (LGAAR)
- Demographics User Group
- Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments
- GLA Intelligence Unit
- Northwest Regional Development Agency
- South West Observatories
- Royal Statistical Society (RSS)
- Society of Business Economists
- Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
- Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS)
- World Trade Stats
- Welsh Assembly Government (WAG)
- Health Statistics User Group
- House of Commons/Lords Library
- Statistics User Forum (SUF)
- European Central Bank
- Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)
- Communities and Local Government (CLG)
- Federation of Irish Societies
- The Scottish Government
- HM Treasury (HMT)
- West Midlands Cancer Intelligence Unit (WMCIU)
- National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

3. Summary of Responses

A lack of reference to the GSS or ONS's role in the GSS - a section has now been added referencing the GSS and ONS's role.

No mention of the UK Statistics Authority Monitoring Report Strengthening User Engagement - the document was used as a basis for the Strategy in drafting and a specific reference has now been made.

The specific purpose of the strategy was unclear - a paragraph has been added stating that this is a high level document from which ONS business areas will develop more detailed user engagement plans, specific to their user groups.

Strengthening the benefits to ONS - in particular, additional statements have been made on ONS being more informed and better suited to reflect the needs of users.

User groups - this issue attracted the most comments and the final draft contains two additional user groups - Private Sector and Voluntary/Community sector. The lack of a specific reference to the Private Sector was where ONS was most heavily criticised. Other amendments include changing the 'Local Authorities' user group to 'Sub National Organisations', including references to the citizen and the community.

Users, Customers and Ambassadors - a number of comments were received on the concept of turning user into customers and ultimately ambassadors. A number of comments welcomed the approach, whereas others discussed the pros and cons of the term customer. We have clarified the definitions of these terms in the strategy in response to feedback

Monitoring (section 2.3.6) – a number of comments stated that the section was at odds with the rest of the strategy and read negatively. In particular, it did not promote enough two –way dialogue. This has been revised in light of the comments received.

4. Next Steps

We would like to thank all respondents for taking time to respond to the consultation exercise and welcome all the response received. We have revised the strategy in light of the comments received and have now published the strategy on the ONS website.