

Robert Chote
Chairman
Office for Budget Responsibility
102 Petty France
London
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20 October 2017

Dear Robert,

2016-based National Population Projections (including mortality rate projections)

Thank you for your letter of 18 October seeking exceptional pre-release access to the next set of ONS population projections to support the work of the Office for Budget Responsibility.

As you know, on 15 June the National Statistician announced that pre-release access to ONS statistics would end from 1 July. He said that '*Should there be a need for exceptional pre-release access to particular individuals for a specific release this would be fully transparent*'.

The overarching principle is that an exceptional circumstance is where someone would need to act or make a decision in the public interest on the basis of the statistics. Not granting pre-release in such a case runs the risk of decisions being made on the basis of out of date information.

Given that you need to deliver the second round of the fiscal forecast very soon after the publication of the population projections as a basis for the Autumn Budget process, I recognise the need for pre-release access to avoid using superseded projections. I am therefore pleased to confirm that we will provide 48-hours pre-release access to the data as requested.

The data supplied will comprise principal projections (to 2070) for United Kingdom and constituent countries, broken down by single year of age and sex.

Ahead of the pre-release access, ONS will require the names of any and all individuals who will be accessing data ahead of publication.

Yours sincerely



Iain Bell
Deputy National Statistician and Director General, Population and Public Policy
Office for National Statistics