

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 23rd FEBRUARY 2016**

Question

In order to better understand the impact of the recession on the economy in comparison with other countries, will the Chief Minister publish the data contained in the Income Distribution Survey on household incomes by decile along with the 90/10 income ratio and the ratio of average earnings between the top and bottom deciles, and if not, why not?

Answer

The report on Jersey Household Income Distribution 2014/15 was published by the independent Statistics Unit in November 2015; the report can be found on the Statistics Unit website at:

<http://www.gov.je/SiteCollectionDocuments/Government%20and%20administration/R%20Income%20Distribution%20Survey%20Report%202014-15%2020151112%20SU.pdf>

The detailed analysis and objective interpretation contained in this report has already proven to be an invaluable source of information for government and will continue to be for several years, until the next round of the Income Distribution Survey (IDS) is carried out.

The published report presents the current status of household income in Jersey and, through previous rounds of the IDS conducted over the past 15 years, an assessment of change in household income over time. Compared with similar sized jurisdictions, Jersey is fortunate to have such detailed and consistent information available for the purposes of policy development and evaluation.

As well as presenting the full income distribution, the report presents analyses broken down by household composition, tenure and income quintile. For the purposes of international comparison, the report utilises a commonly applied definition of relative low income and presents three measures of income inequality: the Gini coefficient; the 90-10 income ratio (*see page 22 of the report*); and the 90-10 income shares ratio.

Consideration of household income broken down by income, or any other variable, is governed by the statistical accuracy and robustness of the results. Furthermore, analysis by income quintile enables comparison with the published results of previous rounds of the IDS.

In order to consider the publication of income broken down at a more detailed level, e.g. by income decile, I must defer to the professional expertise and judgement of the independent Statistics Unit, and specifically to that of the Chief Statistician.

The Chief Statistician assures me that the Statistics Unit will investigate the feasibility of publishing further information at the level of income decile. If he considers that the results of such an exercise are meaningful in terms of statistical accuracy and robustness he will publish the information on the Statistics Unit website. In the interim he invites the Deputy, or any other States Member, to discuss specific data needs with him directly.