

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY SENATOR S.Y. MÉZEC
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 13th SEPTEMBER 2021
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 20th SEPTEMBER 2021**

Question

What objective statistical evidence does the Chief Minister have to demonstrate whether income inequality has either increased or reduced during his term of office?

Answer

Income inequality in Jersey is measured in detail via the Living Costs and Household Income Survey (formerly the household Income Distribution Report. The last income distribution data published was from the 'Jersey household Income Distribution Report 2014/15' published in November 2015. Statistics Jersey started the Living Costs and Household Income Survey in mid-2019 but this household survey had to be cancelled in March 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions, with only around half the expected number of responses.

Having consulted with the Chief Statistician, Statistics Jersey have not yet been able to process and analyse the results from the 2019-20 survey, but are using their best endeavours to ensure that this data is analysed and published during Q1 2022. As the Senator will be aware from a number of statements in the Assembly, the Chief Minister shares his frustration over the lack of up to date statistical evidence on income inequality in Jersey, the Council of Ministers has ensured that Statistics Jersey has been funded to restart the Living Costs and Household Income Survey – first responses will be collected this month.

It should also be noted that the Council of Ministers has undertaken a number of measures to assist Islanders in lower income brackets in Jersey including; subsidising GP fees for up to 12,000 Islanders on Income Support or Pension Plus; increasing the minimum wage three separate times for a total rise of 5.6% since April 2019. Furthermore, Andium rents have been frozen for 2021 with further announcements being included in the forthcoming Government Plan; Emergency Tenancy legislation introduced to protect tenants from financial hardship during COVID-19 and provided additional financial support for families on income support with children, and not forgetting the payments made in parallel to the Spend Local Card.