

List of National Statistics – Frequently Asked Questions

What information does the list contain?

For each National Statistics product, the list contains: the statistical theme, the name of the producer, the title, the country that the statistics relate to, the frequency of publication, and the number of the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) assessment report.

OSR divides its work into twelve statistical themes:

[Agriculture & Environment](#)

[Business, Industry, Trade & Energy](#)

[Children, Education & Skills](#)

[Crime & Justice](#)

[Culture & Identity](#)

[Economy](#)

[Health & Social Care](#)

[Housing, Planning & Local Services](#)

[Labour Market & Welfare](#)

[Population](#)

[Security, Defence & International Relations](#)

[Travel, Transport & Tourism](#)

Some statistical products cover more than one theme; for example, mortality statistics could fall under the Health & Social Care theme or the Population theme, depending on the specific topic. We have assigned each statistical product to just one theme.

The frequency of publication of each statistical product varies and can be categorised as follows:

Weekly

Monthly

Quarterly

Every 4 months

Every 6 months

Annual

Every 2 years

Every 3 years

Every 4 years
Every 5 years
Every 7 years
Every 10 years
Ad hoc

Ad hoc releases have an irregular publication schedule.

How did you compile the list?

Until 2016, the National Statistician's Office produced and published a list of all official statistics, including National Statistics. The list was based on a data extract from the main government website, gov.uk. However, the list was not updated regularly, contained some duplication and did not include statistics produced by organisations that do not publish on gov.uk, such as the Scottish Government.

The [Government Statistical Service \(GSS\) Data Discovery project](#), which aims 'to research and identify the feasibility, implications, risks and benefits of developing a standard approach to data publishing across the GSS, making it easier for users to find, access and interrogate our data' conducted an exercise to update this list. The project received around a 70% response rate from lead statisticians, who checked the validity of this list, across producer organisations.

Using these two lists as a starting point, we verified the accuracy of existing information and updated and added information using gov.uk and the websites of the Devolved Administrations. Members of OSR who specialise in a particular statistical theme manually checked the list of National Statistics for that theme. They updated names of statistical products where they had changed, removed statistical products that are no longer published, and added in statistical product that were missing from the list.

To confirm that a statistical product was designated as a National Statistic, we traced each product back to the relevant OSR assessment report. For a small number, there was uncertainty about the National Statistics status; for example, because we could not find a reference to the product in any assessment report. In these cases, we contacted the lead statistician or Head of Profession to gather further information (such as name changes) and, where necessary, challenged the labelling of the statistical product as National Statistics if there was no evidence that it is a National Statistic.

What can I use the list for?

The list contains all National Statistics produced by UK Government departments, Devolved Administration bodies and arm's length bodies. It can be used to search for statistics by theme, producer or country. Care should be taken when comparing the total

number of National Statistics products across departments or countries, as apparently similar-sounding titles of statistical products can contain very different information.

Comparisons by statistical producer or geography

Devolved Administrations are structured differently from each other. This influences the production of statistics in those countries, both in terms of the number of statistical producers and the distribution of statistical products among producers. For example, the majority of Welsh statistics is produced centrally by one government body, the Welsh Government. As a result, the Welsh Government is the second largest producer of National Statistics after the Office for National Statistics. There are also a handful of official statistics producers in Wales.

By comparison, in Scotland, there are three main producers of statistics: the Scottish Government, National Records of Scotland, and Information Services Division Scotland (a division of National Services Scotland, part of NHS Scotland). Each of these organisations produces between 40 and 60 National Statistics products, and, combined, they publish more National Statistics products than the Welsh Government.

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is the principal source of official and National Statistics in Northern Ireland. NISRA statisticians produce National Statistics in Northern Ireland government departments and some other public bodies. So, it is important to take into account these different structures when comparing the number of National Statistics products between countries and producers.

It is worth noting that many National Statistics products cover two or more countries. As comparisons between individual countries do not capture these aggregated outputs, they are unlikely to reflect the full extent of differences between countries. Also, some statistical producers produce National Statistics products at multiple geographical levels. For example, some of the statistics produced by the Office for National Statistics cover the whole of the United Kingdom, some cover Great Britain, and others cover England and Wales. Similarly, depending on the topic area, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs produces either statistics at the UK level or England-specific statistics.

Comparisons by statistical theme

Many statistical themes align closely with government policy areas. Statistical themes that align with a policy area that is devolved (for example, education statistics) may be more likely to have a higher number of National Statistics products, as each administration releases its own statistics, than those themes that align with a policy area that is less, or not, devolved.

Another possible reason for differences in the number of National Statistics products between statistical themes is the way that the statistics are defined and classified. Health and Social Care is such a large theme partly because there are a lot of National Statistics products on related topics, such as deaths (which are produced by a number of different departments). In other themes, like Crime and Justice, producers have taken a different approach, by combining a lot of related information into one product. A good example of this is ONS's 'Crime in England and Wales' release, which includes statistics on all crime types in one product rather than producing a separate bulletin for each crime type.

Comparisons with official statistics

The number of National Statistics products may not be proportionate to the number of official statistics products. For example, in the Labour Market and Welfare theme, there are few National Statistics products on welfare but a large number of official statistics products on this topic. All official statistics released by a department can be found on gov.uk, the Devolved Administration's websites, or, for ONS, on the [ONS website](#).

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How does the work on the list align with the pillars of the Code of Practice for Statistics?

The Code of Practice for Statistics (the Code) is built around three main concepts, or pillars: trustworthiness, quality, and value. Trustworthiness is about having confidence in the people and organisations that publish statistics. Quality is about using data and methods that produce assured statistics. Value is about publishing statistics that support society's needs for information,

In compiling this list, we have applied the pillars of the Code in a proportionate way, as explained below.

Trustworthiness

- The work was conducted independently by an experienced analyst in the Office for Statistics Regulation. They reported to the Director General for Regulation. The work was not overseen or signed off by anyone in a statistical production role.
- The list was originally released alongside the Office for Statistics Regulation's review of its first year, which was published in December 2017

Quality

- The main data source for this list was the National Statistician's list of official statistics, and the work by the GSS Data Discovery project to update that list
- We checked the accuracy of existing information, and updated and added information from other sources, primarily the UK Government and Devolved Administration websites
- To verify that a statistical product was designated as National Statistics and to ensure that we have a coherent list, we triangulated it against assessment reports published by the Office for Statistics Regulation
- We quality assured the data by asking members of OSR who specialise in a particular statistical theme to review the list against their knowledge of the theme
- We identified a small number statistics that should not be classified as National Statistics
- At the time of publication, there is still a small number of products for which the National Statistics remains uncertain, and we are working to clarify their status

Value

- The list provides an insight into the National Statistics landscape, including the total number of National Statistics products produced by government, who produces National Statistics, and the geographic coverage of those products
- It does not provide any comment on the appropriate use of the individual statistical releases or provide any analysis of the gaps or overlaps in coverage of key issues across the. This analysis is part of the ongoing work of the Office for Statistics Regulation