



List of National Statistics – Frequently Asked Questions

What information does the list contain?

For each National Statistics product, the list contains:

- the statistical domain
- the name of the producer
- the title
- the country that the statistics relate to
- the frequency of publication
- the number of the latest Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) assessment report
- a link to published outcomes of the latest Compliance Check (if applicable).

OSR divides its work into twelve statistical domains:

[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 domain; for example, mortality statistics could fall under the Health & Social Care domain or the Population domain, depending on the specific topic. We have assigned each statistical product to just one domain.

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 - releases that 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](https://www.gov.uk). However, there were some limitations to this data extract, for example it did not include statistics produced by organisations that do not publish on gov.uk, such as Scottish Government.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 per cent 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 statistical domain manually checked the list of National Statistics for that domain. They updated names of statistical products where they had changed, removed statistical products that are no longer published, and added in statistical products 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.

How do you maintain the list?

We aim to publish updates to the National Statistics list four times a year. We maintain an internal log of changes to be made to the list. We update the log primarily based on our published decisions:

- designations of new National Statistics (Assessments)
- confirmations of continuing designations as National Statistics (Assessments and Compliance Checks)
- de-designations and re-designations (recorded on our [register of de-designations](#))

Heads of Profession are also required to advise us of plans to discontinue National Statistics or transfers of responsibility for the production of the statistics to another producer. Our domain topic experts also share their intelligence about changes to National Statistics – for example, changes to the name of the statistics or the producer and any changes in content such as the merging of statistical outputs.

Every time we publish the National Statistics list we send it to Heads of Profession and ask them to alert us to any changes we have not picked up, and these will be processed with the next update.

In summer 2019 we are carrying out a review of the National Statistics list to understand all the ways it is used and to further improve its content and presentation. We are inviting feedback and ideas for improvement to be sent to regulation@statistics.gov.uk.

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 domain, 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 are 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 domain

Many statistical domains align closely with government policy areas. Statistical domains 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 domains 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 domains is the way that the statistics are defined and classified. Health and Social Care is such a large domain 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 domains, 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 domain, 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 compilation of 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 maintaining this list, we apply the pillars of the Code in a proportionate way, as explained below.

Trustworthiness

- The work is managed by the Business Manager in the Office for Statistics Regulation, reporting to the Deputy Director for Regulation. The work is 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, and updates are now published up to four times a year. We pre-announce update months in our [Publications Calendar](#).

Quality

- The main data sources used for updating the National Statistics list are the published decisions of the Office for Statistics Regulation.
- While our decisions will inform most changes to the National Statistics List, not all changes to National Statistics result from our decisions – for example, the statistics producer may rename, restructure or even discontinue National Statistics. In the latter case the Head of Profession is required to alert the Office for Statistics Regulation and explain their reasoning. In other cases, we rely on statistics producers to apply good practice and alert us (we send a link to the updated list to Heads of Profession every time we publish with instructions on how to contact us), supplemented by the intelligence our statistical domain experts gather through their horizon scanning and engagement activities. We consider it would not be a proportionate use of our time to review every entry on the National Statistics List every time we publish. However, we do expect to do a complete review around every two years. The next review is scheduled for Summer 2019.

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. This analysis is part of the ongoing work of the Office for Statistics Regulation
- As part of our review this summer, we will seek to understand further the different ways people use the list and develop it as far as we can to meet those needs.