Statistical bulletin

GDP, UK regions and countries: April to June 2021

Quarterly economic activity within the countries of the UK (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) and the nine English regions (North East, North West, Yorkshire and The Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands, East of England, London, South East, and South West).

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Next release:
31 May 2022

Notice

31 July 2026

We will be introducing substantial methods and data changes to our existing quarterly regional gross domestic product (GDP) outputs. We will introduce the changes in our Update on reinstating quarterly regional GDP estimates for England and Wales article series. When we fully reinstate the output we will start a new series for statistical articles, datasets, and a quality and methodology guide.

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1 . Other pages in this release

- Methodology used to produce these estimates
- GDP in Scotland, published by the Scottish Government
- GDP in Northern Ireland, published by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

2 . Main points

- In Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2021, all four countries in the UK showed positive quarter-on-quarter growth; Wales increased by 6.2%, Scotland increased by 5.6%, England increased by 4.8% and Northern Ireland increased by 3.0%.
- All nine English regions experienced an increase in Quarter 2 2021; the North East, and Yorkshire and The Humber showed the largest increases, of 6.9% and 6.0% respectively.
- The North West and the East of England recorded the lowest growth in Quarter 2 2021, of 4.0% and 4.2% respectively.
- In all English regions and Wales, the industry with the largest growth in Quarter 2 2021 was accommodation and food service activities (as high as 63.9% in the West Midlands), following the easing of coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions.
- Data within this release have been updated to include Quarter 2 2021 but do not include any revisions to earlier data periods, including alignment to recently published Annual Regional Accounts or Quarterly National Accounts; as such, the majority of this release presents only quarter-on-quarter changes from Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2021 to Quarter 2 2021.
- As part of the ongoing development of these experimental statistics, we are currently undertaking a project to refine methods to further improve data quality; we will incorporate revisions to the historical data at the same time as introducing any improvements to methods, to minimise the frequency of revisions for our users (see Section 5).

3 . GDP, UK regions and countries data

Quarterly country and regional GDP
Dataset | Released 18 February 2022
Quarterly economic activity within Wales and the nine English regions (North East, North West, Yorkshire and The Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands, East of England, London, South East, and South West).

Regional GDP Data Sources Catalogue
Dataset | Released 18 February 2022
A breakdown of all the data sources that feed into the measure of quarterly country and regional gross domestic product (GDP).

4 . Glossary

GDP

Gross domestic product (GDP) measures the value of goods and services produced in the UK. It estimates the size of, and growth, in the economy.

Production

Production is the process of combining various materials or other inputs in order to generate a product for consumption. It includes output in the manufacturing (the largest component of production), mining and quarrying, energy supply, and water supply and waste management industries.

Services

Services are activities that people or businesses provide for a consumer or other businesses. The main components of the service industries are: wholesale and retail; hotels and restaurants; transport, storage and communication; business services and finance; and government and other services.

5 . Measuring the data

Background and development

In this release, we have paused updating the historical time series between Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2012 and Quarter 1 2021, as we focus on developing methods to improve data quality to minimise the frequency of revisions for our users. The development of these statistics is part of our ongoing work programme on experimental statistics.

The main focus in this release is on the period Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2021, and the earlier data are not balanced to the most recently published annual Regional Accounts, which is the preferred source for annual gross domestic product (GDP) changes.

Index data are presented in this release from Quarter 1 2012 to Quarter 2 2021 for each region, at total industry level, in the "key figures" tables published alongside this release.

However, the industry breakdown for the nine English regions and Wales are presented only as quarter-on-previous-quarter changes, from Quarter 1 2020 to Quarter 2 2021.

We have presented a longer time series for the total industry regional data (from 2012) as, at that level, it will be subject to less revision on future alignment.

Users who require quarterly region-by-industry data over a longer time period than presented in this release could take historical data from our previous release and add on the latest data period. However, in doing so, they should be aware that the time series is subject to future revision.

Our work package for improvement includes a review of consistency between UK GDP and quarterly regional GDP, the processing methodology, and the constraints imposed as the datasets are compiled.

6 . Strengths and limitations

These data are designated as experimental statistics. These are statistics that are in the testing phase. We will continue to develop these statistics and seek users' views on their uses and needs for these data. You can provide feedback to help inform our development work by emailing regionalgdp@ons.gov.uk.

The main data source for these estimates is turnover data from approximately 1.9 million value added tax (VAT) returns. Information from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) on workplace employment allows us to apportion the VAT turnover for each business based on their employment share within a region. The quality assurance of administrative data (QAAD) report for VAT data is available.

Other volume measure data are used where appropriate or where VAT data have insufficient coverage. A full list of other data sources is included in the data sources catalogue.

While the data sources and methods used in both our regional and national estimates of gross domestic product (GDP) are broadly similar, there are some clear differences. For example, there are differences in the extent to which VAT data are used in the compilation of these estimates. These estimates aim to produce the best estimates at a subnational level.

7 . Related links

Model-based early estimates of regional gross value added in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland
Bulletin | Updated quarterly
Experimental model-based estimates of quarterly regional Gross Value Added (GVA) output for the nine English regions, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

GDP monthly estimate, UK: December 2021
Bulletin | Released 11 February 2022
Gross domestic product (GDP) measures the value of goods and services produced in the UK.

Regional economic activity by gross domestic product, UK: 1998 to 2019
Bulletin | Released 26 May 2020
Annual estimates of economic activity by UK country, region and local area using gross domestic product (GDP). Estimates are available in current market prices and in chained volume measures, and include a full industry breakdown of balanced regional gross value added (GVA(B)).

GDP Quarterly National Accounts: 2021 Quarter 2 (April to June)
Statistical publication | Released 3 November 2021
This publication includes gross domestic product (GDP) for Scotland produced by the Scottish Government.

NI Composite Economic Index
Web page | Last updated 13 January 2022
The Northern Ireland Composite Economic Index (NICEI) is an experimental quarterly measure of the performance of the Northern Ireland (NI) economy based on available official statistics.

Short-term output indicators
Web page | Last updated 26 January 2022
Data from the Welsh Government showing the short-term movements in the output of industries in the production, construction and market services sectors.