

Article

Revisions to workforce jobs, UK: December 2023

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1 . Main points

- Revisions have been made to the workforce jobs series as a result of benchmarking to the latest estimates of the annual Business Register and Employment Survey, revisions to public sector employment, revisions to Northern Ireland employee jobs estimates and revisions to Short-Term Employment Surveys.
- There were also revisions to the government-supported trainees (GST) from the devolved administrations, revisions to His Majesty's Forces (HMF) and changes to seasonal parameters following a seasonal adjustment review.
- These revisions to the workforce jobs series have mostly decreased the estimates, and the largest impact is in September 2022 with a fall of 178,000 (down 0.49%).

2 . Overview of revisions to workforce jobs

Workforce jobs (WFJ) is a quarterly measure of the number of jobs in the UK and is the preferred measure of the change in jobs by industry. It is a compound source that draws on a range of employer surveys, household surveys and administrative sources. WFJ is the sum of:

- employee jobs (EJ) measured primarily by employer surveys (mainly) the Short-Term Employment Surveys (STES) and the Quarterly Public Sector Employment Survey (QPSES)
- self-employment jobs (SEJ) from the Labour Force Survey (LFS)
- government-supported trainees (GST) and His Majesty's Forces (HMF) from the devolved administrations, administrative sources and the LFS

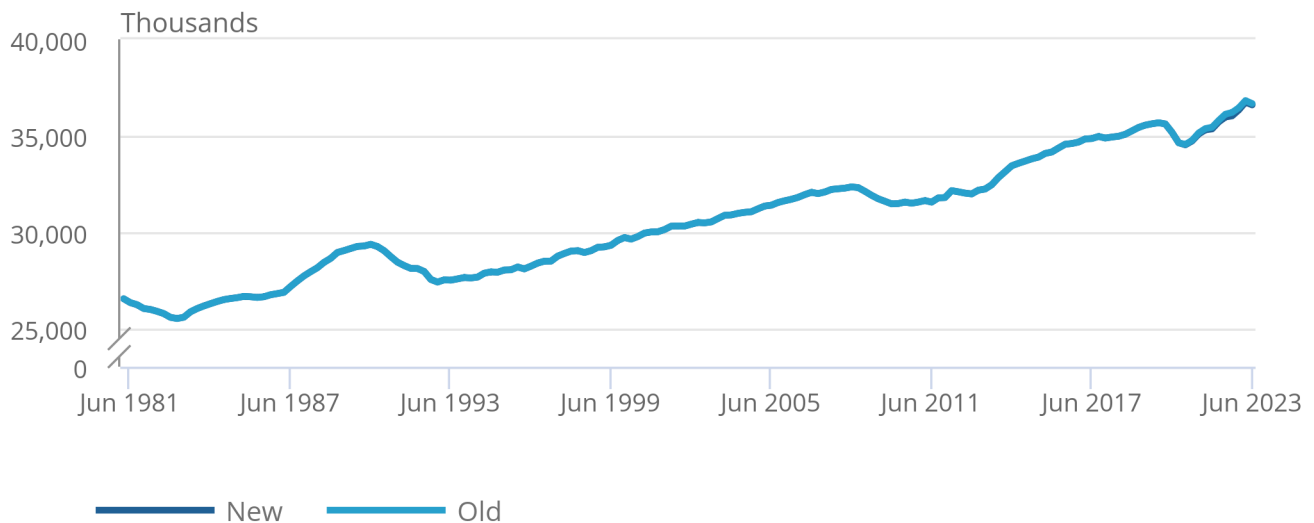
A variety of outputs by industry, region, sex and full-time or part-time status are produced for a range of publications and users.

Figure 1: Previously published versus revised UK seasonally adjusted workforce jobs

March 1981 to June 2023

Figure 1: Previously published versus revised UK seasonally adjusted workforce jobs

March 1981 to June 2023



Source: Workforce Jobs from the Office for National Statistics

The revisions to WFJ have mostly decreased the estimates. The largest impact is in September 2022, with a fall of 178,000 (down 0.49%). For further details on the causes of the revisions and the revisions periods, [see Section 6: Data sources and quality](#)

3 . Revisions by component

Benchmarking Great Britain employee jobs to the Business Register and Employment Survey

Benchmarking is an annual process to align the quarterly Great Britain employee jobs (EJ) series to the latest estimates from the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES). BRES is based on a sample of approximately 88,000 reporting units, which hold the mailing address to which survey questionnaires are sent (questionnaires can cover the enterprise or parts of the enterprise identified by lists of local units). This is a much larger sample than the Short-Term Employment Surveys (STES), and therefore generally considered to produce more accurate and detailed estimates of the level of employment.

BRES estimates refer to September of a given year. The private sector element of the Great Britain EJ series has been benchmarked to the equivalent from BRES for the periods September 2021 and September 2022 (the latest period available).

Revisions to public sector employment

Workforce jobs (WFJ) makes use of our official public sector employment (PSE) estimates for Great Britain. These inputs are not benchmarked as they are the definitive measure of PSE. The data received up to September 2023 have led to revisions back to December 2021. For further information, [see Section 3: Measuring the data section in our Public sector employment, UK: September 2022 bulletin](#).

Revisions to Short-Term Employment Surveys

The private sector employee jobs data come from sample surveys. Each quarter, revisions to data supplied or late data are incorporated for the previous quarter in line with the revisions policy. Revisions or late data for earlier periods (June 2022 onwards) have now been included.

Revisions to government-supported trainees

Revised estimates of government-supported trainees taken on from the devolved administrations caused revisions back to September 2021.

Seasonal adjustment

Seasonal adjustment is the process of identifying and removing the seasonal components from a series to leave the underlying trend and irregular components. The revised WFJ series has undergone a seasonal adjustment review, by our Time Series Analysis Branch, causing revisions back to September 1981.

4 . Workforce jobs revisions data

[Revisions to workforce jobs by component, UK](#)

Dataset | Released 12 December 2023

Estimates of revisions to workforce jobs by component for the UK.

5 . Glossary

Workforce jobs

Workforce jobs is a quarterly measure of the number of jobs in the UK and is the preferred measure of the change in jobs by industry.

Jobs

A [job](#) is an activity performed for an employer or customer by a worker in exchange for payment, usually in cash, or in kind, or both. The number of jobs is not the same as the number of [people in employment](#). This is because a person can have more than one job.

The number of jobs is the sum of employee jobs from employer surveys, self-employment jobs from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), those in His Majesty's Forces and government-supported trainees. The number of people in employment is measured by the LFS; these estimates are available in our [Employment in the UK bulletin](#).

A [more detailed glossary](#) is available.

6 . Data sources and quality

This article explains, in detail, the revisions that have been made to the workforce jobs (WFJ) series as a result of:

- benchmarking to the latest estimates from the annual Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES); these revisions will go back to December 2020
- revisions to public sector employment (PSE); these revisions will go back to December 2021
- revisions to Short-Term Employment Surveys (STES) from June 2022, because of updates in data supplied or late data
- revisions to Northern Ireland employee jobs; these revisions will go back to March 2005
- revised estimates of government-supported trainees taken on from the devolved administrations caused revisions back to September 2021
- revisions to His Majesty's Forces will go back to December 2012
- changes to seasonal parameters following a seasonal adjustment review; these revisions will go back to September 1981

Workforce jobs sources

These are the four components of the WFJ series and the sources of their respective data

Component 1: employee jobs, Great Britain

Private sector source

Short-Term Employer Surveys (STES), benchmarked to the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES).

Public sector source

Public sector employment (PSE) from Quarterly Public Sector Employment Surveys (QPSES) and administrative sources from other government departments and devolved administrations.

Agriculture source

Labour Force Survey (LFS), benchmarked either to BRES, or the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) farms data, or both.

Air transport source

Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), benchmarked to BRES.

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

Component 2: self-employment jobs

Labour Force Survey (LFS) -- main and second jobs by industry by region.

Component 3: government-supported trainees

England

Labour Force Survey (LFS).

Wales

Welsh Government (WG), split by industry using LFS.

Scotland

Scottish Government (SG), split by industry using LFS.

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

Component 4: His Majesty's Forces

Defence Analytical Services and Advice (DASA).

7 . Related links

[Estimates of sampling variability for workforce jobs](#)

Dataset | Released 12 September 2023

Workforce jobs sampling variability estimates (95% confidence intervals and coefficients of variation). These sampling variability estimates are usually updated once a year.

[Workforce Jobs Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\)](#)

Methodology | Released 5 March 2013

This report provides a range of information that describes the quality of workforce jobs, how the output is created including validation and quality assurance, concepts and definitions, and other information relating to quality trade-offs and user needs.

8 . Cite this article

Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 12 December 2023, ONS website, article, [Revisions to workforce jobs: December 2023](#)