

Statistical bulletin

Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), UK: February 2023

Estimates of young people (aged 16 to 24 years) who are not in education, employment or training, by age and sex.

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1 . Main points

- There was a sharp increase in the number of young people who were aged 16 to 24 years and not in education, employment or training (NEET) in October to December 2022, following decreases one year into the pandemic, with the total currently estimated to be 788,000, up from 724,000 in July to September 2022.
- The percentage of all young people who were NEET in October to December 2022 was estimated at 11.5%, up 0.9 percentage points on the quarter (July to September 2022), and up 0.5 percentage points compared with pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic levels (October to December 2019).
- The increase in the number of young people who were NEET was equally driven by men and women, who both saw an increase of 32,000 on the quarter (from July to September 2022).
- The number of young people who were NEET and unemployed in October to December 2022 was estimated to be 299,000, an increase of 65,000 on the quarter (from July to September 2022); this was the biggest quarterly increase since July to September 2011 and a record quarterly increase for women of 32,000.
- There were an estimated 489,000 young people in the UK who were NEET and economically inactive, a small decrease on the quarter (July to September 2022) of 1,000.

2 . Total young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET)

An estimated 11.5% of all people aged 16 to 24 years in the UK were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in October to December 2022. This is up 0.9 percentage points on the quarter, up 1.3 percentage points compared with October to December 2021, and up 0.5% on pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic levels (October to December 2019).

An estimated 11.9% of young men (up 0.9 percentage points on the quarter) and 11.1% of young women (up 1.0 percentage point on the quarter) were NEET. There were 788,000 young people who were NEET in total, an increase of 64,000 on the quarter, which was equally driven by both men and women. Of the total number of young people who were NEET, 416,000 were men and 372,000 were women.

The total number of people aged 18 to 24 years who were NEET was 730,000, up 55,000 on the previous quarter.

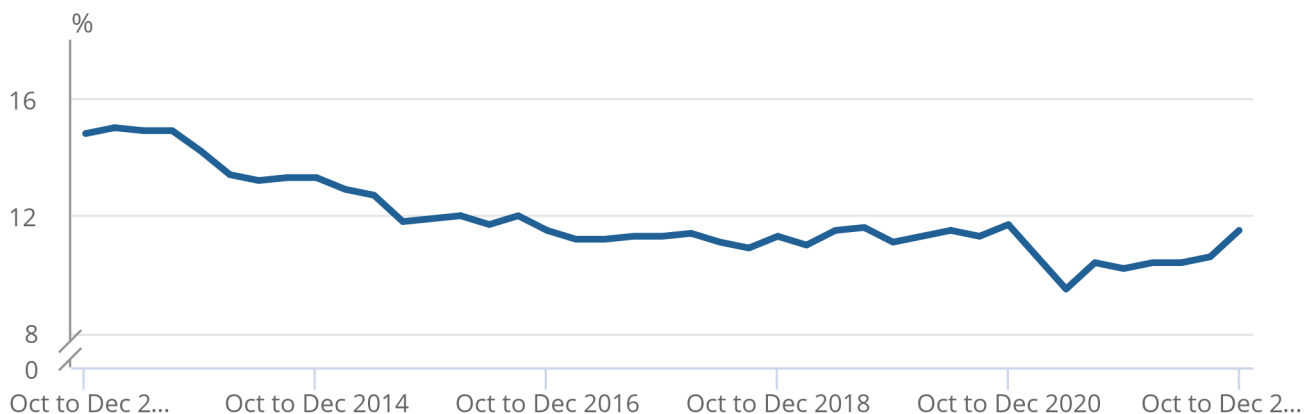
The percentage of those aged 18 to 24 years who were NEET was 13.6%, which was up 1.0 percentage point on the quarter.

Figure 1: The percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) saw a sharp increase over the quarter (October to December 2022), following decreases one year into the pandemic

People aged 16 to 24 years NEET as a percentage of all people aged 16 to 24 years, seasonally adjusted, UK, October to December 2012 to October to December 2022

Figure 1: The percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) saw a sharp increase over the quarter (October to December 2022), following decreases one year into the pandemic

People aged 16 to 24 years NEET as a percentage of all people aged 16 to 24 years, seasonally adjusted, UK, October to December 2012 to October to December 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics – Labour Force Survey

Unemployed young people who were not in education, employment or training

There were an estimated 299,000 unemployed young people aged 16 to 24 years who were NEET in October to December 2022, up 65,000 from July to September 2022 and up 42,000 compared with October to December 2021. An estimated 188,000 of these unemployed NEETs were men and 111,000 were women.

Economically inactive young people who were not in education, employment or training

There were an estimated 489,000 economically inactive young people aged 16 to 24 years who were NEET in October to December 2022. This was down 1,000 on the quarter from July to September 2022 and up 52,000 compared with October to December 2021. The number of young men who were NEET and economically inactive was 228,000 and the number of young women was 262,000.

Subnational not in education, employment or training estimates

Subnational estimates for people not in education, employment or training (NEET) are not published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), but can be accessed by following the [Related links in Section 7](#) of this bulletin.

3 . Young people who were not in education, employment or training data

[Young people not in education, employment or training \(NEET\)](#)

Dataset | Released 23 February 2023

Quarterly estimates for young people (aged 16 to 24 years) who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) in the UK.

[Sampling variability for estimates of young people not in education, employment or training](#)

Dataset | Released 23 February 2023

Labour Force Survey sampling quarterly variability estimates for young people (aged 16 to 24 years) who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) in the UK.

4 . Glossary

Young people

For this release, young people are defined as those aged 16 to 24 years. Estimates are also produced for the age groups 16 to 17 years and 18 to 24 years by sex, and separately for the age groups 18 to 20 years, 21 to 22 years and 23 to 24 years.

Education and training

People are considered to be in education or training if they:

- are enrolled on an education course and are still attending or waiting for term to start or restart
- are doing an apprenticeship
- are on a government-supported employment or training programme
- are working or studying towards a qualification
- have had job-related training or education in the last four weeks

Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)

Anybody who is not in any of the forms of education or training listed previously and not in employment is considered to be NEET. As a result, a person identified as NEET will always be either unemployed or economically inactive.

Economic inactivity

People not in the labour force (also known as [economically inactive](#)) are not in employment, but do not meet the internationally accepted definition of unemployment because they have not been seeking work within the last four weeks and/or they are unable to start work in the next two weeks.

Employment

[Employment](#) measures the number of people in paid work, or those who had a job that they were temporarily away from (for example, because they were on holiday or off sick). This differs from the number of jobs because some people have more than one job.

Unemployment

[Unemployment](#) measures people without a job who have been actively seeking work within the last four weeks and are available to start work within the next two weeks.

A [more detailed glossary](#) is available in our guide to Labour Market Statistics.

5 . Measuring the data

This statistical bulletin contains estimates for young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in the UK. The bulletin is published quarterly in February or March, May, August and November. All estimates discussed in this statistical bulletin are for the UK and are seasonally adjusted.

Statistics in this bulletin are used to help monitor progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Explore the UK data on our [SDGs reporting platform](#).

Our [NEET methodological article](#) providing background information explains how missing information for identifying someone as NEET is appropriated based on individual characteristics.

[Labour Force Survey \(LFS\) performance and quality monitoring reports](#) provide data on response rates and other quality-related issues for the LFS.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for NEET statistics for the UK, published within this release. Estimates of the number of young people who are NEET within the countries of the UK and for subnational areas are the responsibility of the Department for Education for England, and the devolved administrations for each of the other countries. There is further information on the availability of subnational estimates of young people who are NEET in [Section 7: Related links](#).

Coronavirus

View [more information on how labour market data sources are affected by the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#).

View a [comparison of our labour market data sources and the main differences](#).

The population totals used for the latest LFS estimates use projected growth rates from Real-Time Information (RTI) data for UK, EU and non-EU populations based on 2021 patterns. The total population used for the LFS therefore does not take into account any changes in migration, birth rates, death rates, and so on, since June 2021, so levels estimates may be under- or over-estimating the true values and should be used with caution. Estimates of rates will, however, be robust.

Relationship to other labour market statistics for young people

Our monthly [Labour market statistical bulletin](#) includes the dataset [A06: Educational status and labour market status for people aged from 16 to 24](#). The NEET statistics and the dataset A06 statistics are both derived from the Labour Force Survey and use the same labour market statuses; however, the educational statuses are derived differently.

For dataset A06, the educational status is based on participation in full-time education only. For NEET statistics, the educational status is based on any form of education or training. Therefore, the dataset A06 category "not in full-time education" includes some people who are in part-time education and/or some form of training and who, consequently, should not be regarded as NEET.

Making our published spreadsheets accessible

Following the Government Statistical Service (GSS) guidance on [releasing statistics in spreadsheets](#), we will be amending our published tables over the coming months to improve usability, accessibility and machine readability of our published statistics. To help users change to the new formats we will be publishing sample versions of a selection of our tables, and where practical, initially publish the tables in both the new and current formats. If you have any questions or comments, please email labour.market@ons.gov.uk.

6 . Strengths and limitations

The figures in this bulletin come from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). Results from sample surveys are always estimates and not precise figures. As the number of people available in the sample gets smaller, the variability of the estimates that we can make from that sample size gets larger. In general, changes in the numbers and rates reported in this bulletin between three-month periods are small and are not usually greater than can be explained by sampling variability.

Our [Sampling variability dataset](#) shows sampling variabilities for estimates of young people who are NEET derived from the LFS.

7 . Related links

[NEET estimates for England](#)

Collection | Last updated 30 June 2022

Young people's participation in education, employment and training and those not in education, employment or training (NEET) from the Department for Education.

[NEET estimates for Scotland \(PDF, 2.42MB\)](#)

Publication | Last updated 30 August 2022

Annual statistical publication reporting on learning, training and work activity of 16- to 19-year-olds in Scotland.

[NEET estimates for Wales](#)

Statistics and research | Last updated 18 January 2023

Data for young people by age, gender, region and local authority from the Welsh Government.

[NEET estimates for Northern Ireland](#)

Tables | Last updated 20 December 2022

Tables from the Labour Market Report, including Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET).

8 . Cite this statistical bulletin

Office for National Statistics (ONS), published 23 February 2023, ONS website, statistical bulletin, [Young people not in education, employment or training \(NEET\), UK: February 2023](#)