

Article

Revisions to workforce jobs: December 2020

This article explains the developments and revisions to the workforce jobs (WFJ) series, released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on 15 December 2020 in the Vacancies and jobs statistical bulletin.

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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 and revisions to Short-Term Employment Surveys.
- Revisions were also made because of the reweighting of series from the Labour Force Survey and changes to seasonal parameters following a seasonal adjustment review.
- These revisions to the workforce jobs series have mostly reduced the estimates and the largest impact is in June 2020, with a fall of 252,000 (down 0.71%).

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 (predominantly 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 Her Majesty's Forces (HMF) from the devolved administrations, administrative sources and LFS

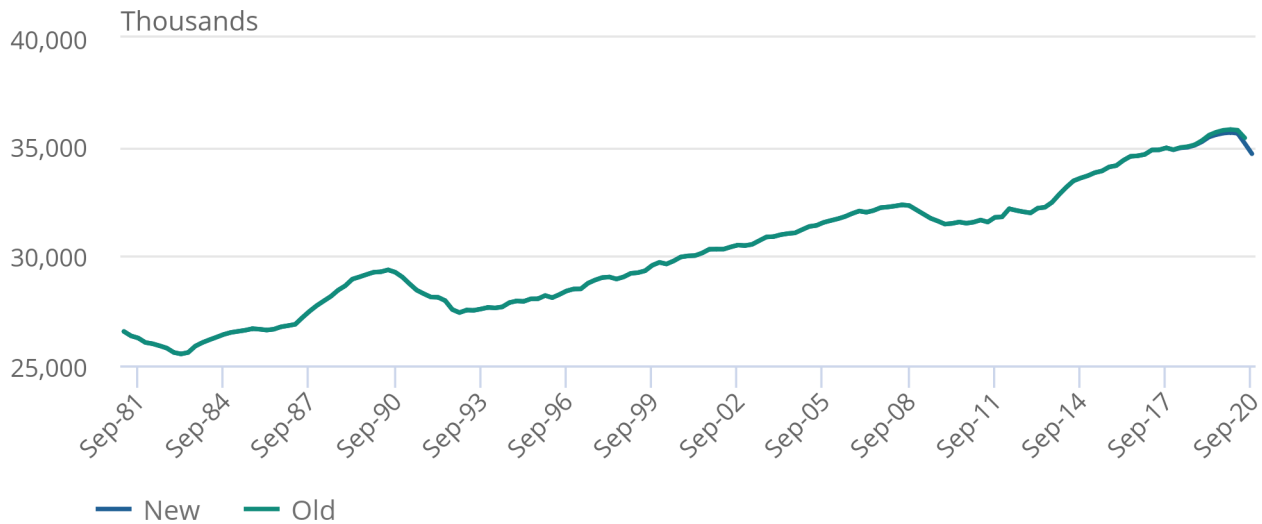
A variety of outputs by industry, region, sex and full-time or part-time status are produced for a range of publications and users.

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

March 1981 to September 2020

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

March 1981 to September 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – workforce jobs

The revisions to WFJ have mostly reduced the estimates. The largest impact is in June 2020 with a fall of 252,000 (down 0.71%). More detail on the causes of the revisions and the revisions periods is available in the [Data sources and quality section](#).

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 85,000 reporting units¹, a much larger sample than the Short-Term Employment Surveys (STES), and so generally is 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 2018 and September 2019 (the latest period available).

Notes for: Benchmarking Great Britain employee jobs to the Business Register Employment Survey

1. Reporting units hold the mailing address to which survey questionnaires are sent. The questionnaire can cover the enterprise, or parts of the enterprise identified by lists of local units.

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 at September 2020 have led to revisions back to June 2017 in WFJ. Further information is available in the [Measuring the data section](#) in the September 2020 PSE statistical 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.

Reweighting the Labour Force Survey

On 13 October 2020, [data from our Labour Force Survey \(LFS\) were reweighted](#). The WFJ estimates, which include some data from the LFS, have been revised to incorporate this reweighting.

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 have undergone a seasonal adjustment review, by our Time Series Analysis branch, causing revisions back to March 1982.

4 . Workforce jobs revisions data

[Revision tables, workforce jobs by component, UK](#)

Dataset | Released 15 December 2020

Estimates of revisions to workforce jobs by component.

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 HM 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](#) release.

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 2017
- revisions to public sector employment (PSE) (impact on WFJ begins in June 2017)
- revisions to Short-Term Employment Surveys (STES) for June 2020, because of updates in data supplied or late data
- reweighting of series sourced from the Labour Force Survey back to March 2020
- changes to seasonal parameters following a seasonal adjustment review; these revisions will go back to March 1981, however, because of rounding will only appear from June 1982

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 to BRES and/or Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) farms data.

Air transport source

Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), benchmarked to BRES.

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

Component 2: Self-employed 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: Her Majesty's Forces

Defence Analytical Services and Advice (DASA).

7 . Related links

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

Dataset | Released 15 September 2020

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

[Quality and Methodology information report for workforce jobs](#)

Report | 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.