

Statistical bulletin

Time use in the UK: 23 September to 1 October 2023

Average daily time spent by adults on activities including paid work, unpaid household work, unpaid care, travel and entertainment. Experimental statistics.

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Release date:
9 November 2023

Next release:
To be announced

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1 . Main points

- The amount of time that adults in the UK spend on entertainment, socialising and other free time activities has been steadily declining over the last three years, down to an average of 3 hours and 39 minutes per day between 23 September and 1 October 2023, compared with 4 hours and 17 minutes between 5 September and 11 October 2020.
- The average daily time that UK adults spent sleeping and resting was 9 hours and 3 minutes between 23 September and 1 October 2023, which was higher than the average of 8 hours and 47 minutes recorded during the 5 September to 11 October 2020 period, when certain lockdown restrictions were reimposed.
- Women spent an average of 3 hours and 37 minutes per day doing unpaid work activities including housework, caring for others and volunteering between 23 September and 1 October 2023; this was 54 minutes more than the average among men at 2 hours and 43 minutes.
- The gap in the average daily time spent on unpaid work between women and men has narrowed in the last three years from 1 hour and 12 minutes in the period from 5 September to 11 October 2020, and from 1 hour and 4 minutes in the period from 12 to 27 November 2022.
- Among men who reported working, the average daily time that they worked away from the home increased slightly (though not statistically significantly) between the periods 5 September to 11 October 2020 and 23 September to 1 October 2023, from 6 hours and 51 minutes to 7 hours and 27 minutes; at the same time, the average daily time spent working from home remained similar at 5 hours and 40 minutes and 5 hours and 38 minutes, respectively.
- The trend among women who reported working was different, with the average daily time spent working from home falling slightly (though not statistically significantly) from 5 hours and 11 minutes in 2020 to 4 hours and 42 minutes in 2023; the average time spent working away from the home was similar in both periods at 6 hours and 33 minutes and 6 hours and 42 minutes, respectively.
- Between 23 September and 1 October 2023, apart from sleeping and working, adults spent most of their daily time, on average, watching television (2 hours and 17 minutes), eating (1 hour and 7 minutes), washing, dressing, using the bathroom and self-grooming (53 minutes), making food and drinks (46 minutes) and socialising with people (32 minutes).

Estimates are based on the main activities that respondents reported doing during their diary day. Time spent doing secondary or passive activities is not included.

2 . Time use data

[Time Use in the UK](#)

Dataset | Released 09 November 2023

Estimates of average daily time spent by adults on activities including paid work, unpaid household work, unpaid care, travel and entertainment, split by various characteristics. Includes data for seven survey waves from March 2020 onwards. Experimental statistics.

3 . Measuring the data

This release contains data collected in the [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\) Online Time Use Survey \(OTUS\)](#), which has been carried out seven times on an experimental basis since March 2020 (please see our [Guide to experimental statistics](#)).

Participants were issued with two pre-allocated diary days (one weekday and one weekend day) and asked to record the activities that they undertook during each full 24-hour period in an online diary tool. This included their main activities (in 10-minute periods) and up to five secondary activities (in five-minute periods). Estimates in this release are based on reported main activities only.

The full set of time use estimates and accompanying 95% [confidence intervals](#), broken down by various characteristics, are included in the accompanying datasets.

Where comparisons are made between estimates, confidence intervals should be used to assess the [statistical significance](#) of the differences.

Sampling and response

The survey uses a representative sample of UK participants selected from the [National Centre for Social Research NatCen Panel](#) using a probability-based sampling approach.

In the 23 September to 1 October 2023 survey, 5,000 adults aged 18 years and over were sampled, resulting in 10,000 diary days being issued. Of these, 3,659 (36.6%) diaries were completed with sufficient information to be weighted and included in analyses.

Weighting

The weighting process takes account of non-response and individual diaries are calibrated with calibration controls applied for age and sex groups, geographical regions, ethnicity, and employment. Diaries are split into two subsets for weekdays and weekends, respectively, which are each calibrated separately. They are then recombined and rescaled using a ratio of 5:2 (weekdays: weekends). In this way, the diary data are made representative of how the UK adult population spends time over the course of a week.

4 . Related links

[Time Use in the UK: March 2023](#)

Statistical Bulletin | Released 04 July 2023

Average daily time spent by adults on activities including paid work, unpaid household work, unpaid care, travel and entertainment. Includes differences in time use among adults who were employed and economically inactive. Experimental statistics.

5 . Cite this statistical bulletin

Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 09 November 2023, ONS website, statistical bulletin, [Time Use in the UK: September 2023](#)