

Statistical bulletin

# Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), UK: November 2024

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

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# 1 . Main points

- Increased volatility of Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates, resulting from smaller achieved sample sizes, means that estimates of change should be treated with caution; we recommend using them alongside our labour market indicators Workforce Jobs (WFJ), Claimant Count data, and Pay As You Earn Real Time Information (PAYE RTI) estimates.
- The longer-term broad coherence between WFJ and RTI, when looking at annual change, suggests that these sources are likely to provide a more reliable estimate of employment, particularly for employees; these sources continue to indicate that we have seen a sustained moderation of growth in employment over the last year.
- It is also likely that some of the recent movements in LFS estimates are being affected by the increased sample size and change in data collection methods taken over the last year, in addition to any underlying changes in the labour market.
- LFS estimates have been weighted to population estimates published in November 2023 for periods from July to September 2022; headline UK seasonally adjusted series before this have been modelled, but other series have a discontinuity at this point.
- There was an increase in the number of young people aged 16 to 24 years not in education, employment or training (NEET) in July to September 2024, with the total currently estimated to be 946,000, up from July to September 2023.

The ongoing challenges with response rates and levels mean that LFS-based labour market statistics will be badged as [official statistics in development](#) until further review. Read more in [Section 5: Data sources and quality section](#).

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

An estimated 13.2% of all people aged 16 to 24 years in the UK were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in July to September 2024. This is an increase compared with July to September 2023, and up on the previous quarter.

An estimated 15.1% of young men (up on the year) and 11.2% of young women (down on the year) were NEET. There were 946,000 young people who were NEET in total, an increase on the year. This increase was caused by young men. Of the total number of young people who were NEET, 550,000 were young men and 397,000 were young women.

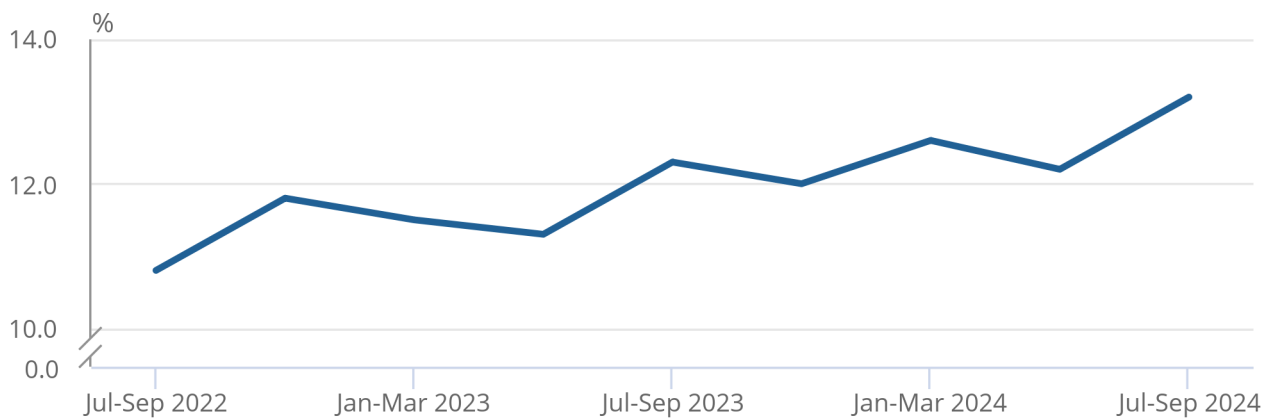
The total number of people aged 18 to 24 years who were NEET was 869,000, up on the previous year. The percentage of those aged 18 to 24 years who were NEET was 15.6%, which was up on the year and up on the quarter.

### Figure 1: The percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) increased over the year (July to September 2023) [Note 1]

People aged 16 to 24 years NEET as a percentage of all people aged 16 to 24 years by age, seasonally adjusted, UK, July to September 2022 to July to September 2024

Figure 1: The percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) increased over the year (July to September 2023) [Note 1]

People aged 16 to 24 years NEET as a percentage of all people aged 16 to 24 years by age, seasonally adjusted, UK, July to September 2022 to July to September 2024



Source: Labour Force Survey from the Office for National Statistics

#### Notes:

1. Increased volatility of Labour Force Survey (LFS) estimates, resulting from smaller achieved sample sizes, means that estimates of change should be treated with additional caution.

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

There were an estimated 395,000 NEET young people aged 16 to 24 years who were unemployed in July to September 2024, up from July to September 2023 and up from April to June 2024.

An estimated 260,000 of these unemployed NEETS were young men, and 134,000 were young women. Both the numbers of NEET men and women aged 16 to 24 years who were unemployed increased on the year.

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

In July to September 2024, there were an estimated 552,000 economically inactive young people aged 16 to 24 years who were NEET. This was down on the year from July to September 2023, but up on the quarter from April to June 2024.

The number of young men who were NEET and economically inactive was 289,000 and the corresponding number of young women was 262,000. The total decrease on the year was caused by young women, who saw a decrease on the year from July to September 2023. Young men aged 16 to 24 years who were NEET and economically inactive increased on the year.

## Subnational not in education, employment or training (NEET) estimates

Subnational estimates for people not in education, employment or training are not published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), but can be accessed in [Section 6: Related links](#).

## 3 . Data on young people who were not in education, employment or training

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

Dataset | Released 21 November 2024

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 21 November 2024

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 previously listed 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 . Data sources and quality

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

## Official statistics in development

These statistics are labelled as "official statistics in development". Until September 2023, these were called "experimental statistics". Read more about the change in our [Guide to official statistics in development](#).

These statistics are based on information from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The reweighting exercise has improved the representativeness of our LFS estimates for periods from July to September 2022, reducing potential bias in our estimates. Nonetheless, the ongoing challenges with response rates and levels mean that LFS-based labour market statistics are now badged as [official statistics in development](#) until further review. This is also in line with the [letter from the Office for Statistics Regulation \(OSR\)](#), stating that LFS statistics should not be published as accredited official statistics until OSR has reviewed them.

Increased volatility of LFS estimates, resulting from smaller achieved sample sizes, means that estimates of change should be treated with additional caution. We recommend using them as part of our suite of labour market indicators, alongside Workforce Jobs (WFJ), Claimant Count data, and Pay As You Earn (PAYE) Real Time Information (RTI) estimates.

The longer-term broad coherence between WFJ and RTI when looking at annual change suggests that these sources are likely to be providing a more reliable estimate of employment, particularly for employees; these sources continue to indicate that we have seen a sustained moderation of growth in employment over the last year.

Despite these coherence challenges, the LFS continues to be the sole source of data for unemployment, economic inactivity and self-employment, and provides a range of breakdowns that are only possible from LFS data.

LFS estimates have been weighted to population estimates published in November 2023 for periods from July to September 2022; headline UK seasonally adjusted series prior to this have been modelled, but other series have a discontinuity at this point.

We would advise caution when interpreting changes in headline LFS rates and recommend using them as part of our suite of labour market indicators alongside Workforce Jobs (WFJ), Claimant Count data and Pay As You Earn Real Time Information (PAYE RTI) estimates.

We are transforming how we collect and produce the LFS data to improve the quality of these statistics. Our [Labour market transformation article](#) provides an update on the transformation of labour market statistics. As stated in the article, we are planning a further reweighting exercise, based on the population projections published in January 2024. We plan to introduce the reweighted LFS series into our Labour Market publication in December 2024. In terms of NEET estimates, this reweighting will be reflected in the February 2025 publication.

More quality and methodology information on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in our [Labour Force Survey quality and methodology information \(QMI\) report](#).

The [LFS performance and quality monitoring reports](#) provide data on response rates, quality analysis, and survey operation changes 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 6: Related links](#).

## Coronavirus

View [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](#).

## Relationship to other labour market statistics for young people

Our monthly [Labour market overview 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 LFS 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](mailto:labour.market@ons.gov.uk).

## Strengths and limitations

The figures in this bulletin come from the 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.

## 6 . Related links

### [NEET estimates for England](#)

Collection | Last updated 26 September 2024

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](#)

Publication | Last updated 27 August 2024

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 9 October 2024

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

### [NEET estimates for Northern Ireland](#)

Tables | Last updated 12 November 2024

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

# 7 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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