

Consultation on changes to NISRA's Statistical Outputs August 2023

Overview

NISRA is consulting our users on proposed changes to our statistical outputs and activities. The consultation opens on Wednesday 23rd August and will close on Sunday 15th October. Feedback on the proposed changes is welcome from all users and stakeholders.

Background

NISRA is the primary source of statistics, analysis and research on the economy, society and population of Northern Ireland. We conduct surveys, collect data and interrogate administrative sources to produce key statistics and analyses. We conduct the Census in Northern Ireland and are responsible for the registration of all births, deaths, marriages, civil partnerships and adoptions in Northern Ireland through the General Register Office.

The work we do is central for decision making in Northern Ireland. Our statistics – many of which are designated as 'National Statistics' by the Statistics Authority, reflecting their trustworthiness, quality and value – help to inform policy-makers, businesses and the general public, so that they can make the best possible decisions with the best possible information.

This mission is an exciting and ongoing challenge. At NISRA, we are evolving our service offering to meet changing user needs; to exploit the potential of new data sources as they emerge and to mobilise new digital technologies and techniques. We believe there are few challenges faced by decision takers in Northern Ireland which are not made easier or more tractable by good data, analysis or research.

Financial context

The financial challenge facing public services in Northern Ireland has been well publicised. As the Northern Ireland Fiscal Council has [set out](#), compared to the outturn for 2022-23, resource expenditure across the NICS will fall by around 0.9% in cash terms in 2023-24 at a time of rising cost pressures, putting departmental budgets under pressure.

This relatively modest fall in overall expenditure impacts [to different degrees](#) across the public sector. The Department of Finance (DOF) – of which NISRA is a part – has seen among the largest nominal resource budget reduction of the big government departments in Northern Ireland. For NISRA, this means that our current funding from DOF is expected to fall by around £1.9m (14.3%) in 2023-24 compared to our opening budget for 2022-23.

Similarly, to other parts of the public sector in Northern Ireland, NISRA has been developing strategies to meet this shortfall. This includes generating new revenue, reducing our costs and tailoring our outputs and activities to align with available resources. This work will enable NISRA to continue to provide insights on the economy, society and population of

Northern Ireland and to progress key parts of our transformation agenda while living within our financial constraints.

Proposals

This consultation forms an important part of NISRA's response to this challenging financial context.

To meet our financial constraints while producing high quality statistics and progressing key parts of our transformation agenda, NISRA will need to make some changes to our statistical outputs and activities. We continue to focus on making our core operations as efficient as possible – ensuring our resources are targeted where they can add the most value for users while meeting our statutory obligations. However, some changes to our statistical outputs will also be required to scale our activities and funding appropriately.

This consultation seeks views from users and stakeholders on a range of proposed changes to our statistical outputs which are set out in detail below. These proposals relate to outputs produced by NISRA statisticians based in the Department of Finance only: further consultations on statistics produced by NISRA statisticians in other departments are likely to follow. This consultation includes statistical outputs which we propose will:

1. be suspended until further notice
2. be scaled back in frequency or in their content
3. be delayed from their planned publication dates.

These proposals have been designed to minimise the impact on our users. Most of the proposals involve scaling back our releases – either by reducing supporting analysis, or by reducing their frequency – but retaining the core datasets on which we know users depend. We have only proposed stopping statistical outputs as a last resort, and only where we believe the data are being put to limited or low impact uses.

However, this consultation is an opportunity for you to provide feedback on these proposals and to tell us how these changes would impact on you, your work and your organisation. We want to understand how the proposed changes would affect our users and to make changes with as little disruption as possible.

How to respond

You can respond via our online [questionnaire](#). The consultation will run from Wednesday 23rd August to Sunday 15th October 2023. We will publish summary findings on the NISRA website on or before Friday 10th November 2023.

Your response will be treated in accordance with [NISRA's privacy policy](#).

If you have any queries, please email: info@nisra.gov.uk

Proposed changes

1. Statistical Outputs proposed to be suspended until further notice

Below is a list of outputs we are proposing to suspend. More detail on each proposal is available below.

- [Deaths Registered with Clostridium Difficile Mentioned on the Death Certificate](#)
- [Deaths Registered with MRSA Mentioned on the Death Certificate](#)
- [Northern Ireland Annual Coal Inquiry](#)
- [Northern Ireland: In Profile](#)
- [Northern Ireland Quarterly Ports Traffic](#)
- [Northern Ireland Statistical Surveys – Assessment of Cost Burden to Businesses](#)
- [Overview of Northern Ireland Trade](#)
- [Overview of Northern Ireland Trade with Great Britain](#)

[Deaths Registered with Clostridium Difficile Mentioned on the Death Certificate](#)

This output produces detailed annual statistics relating to deaths from Healthcare-Associated Infections. Tables are produced for Clostridium Difficile related deaths and include age standardised mortality rates for these causes as well as information relating to age, gender, underlying cause of death and place of death.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with 2022 data is due to be published in January 2024.

Proposed change: This output will be suspended until further notice.

Date proposed change will come into effect: November 2023.

[Deaths Registered with MRSA Mentioned on the Death Certificate](#)

This output produces detailed annual statistics relating to deaths from Healthcare-Associated Infections. Tables are produced for MRSA related deaths and include age standardised mortality rates for these causes as well as information relating to age, gender, underlying cause of death and place of death.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with 2022 data is due to be published in January 2024.

Proposed change: This output will be suspended until further notice.

Date proposed change will come into effect: November 2023.

[Northern Ireland Annual Coal Inquiry](#)

This output collects information on all coal and other solid fuels shipped into Northern Ireland each year, and the purpose for which it was imported: for domestic or industrial use, or for the generation of electricity.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with 2023 data is due to be published in February 2024.

Proposed change: This output will be suspended until further notice.

Date proposed change will come into effect: November 2023.

[Northern Ireland: In Profile](#)

This output is a resource pack of key statistics covering a range of areas of life in Northern Ireland.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with the latest data available was due to be published in Spring 2023 but has been delayed to Autumn 2023.

Proposed change: This output will be suspended until further notice. The information contained in this output is and will continue to be available from either the [NISRA website](#), or published on other websites.

Date proposed change will come into effect: November 2023.

[Northern Ireland Quarterly Ports Traffic](#)

This output is an analysis of the Department for Transport's UK Port Freight Quarterly Statistics, at a Northern Ireland level. It provides provisional quarterly statistics on the volume and tonnage of traffic at Northern Ireland major ports.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with Quarter 2 2023 data is due to be published in September 2023.

Proposed change: This output will be suspended until further notice. The data in this output is and will continue to be available on the [Department for Transport website](#). The [Northern Ireland Annual Ports Traffic](#) output will continue to be published.

Date proposed change will come into effect: November 2023.

[Northern Ireland Statistical Surveys – Assessment of Cost Burden to Businesses](#)

This output details the cost to businesses of complying with statutory and voluntary government statistical surveys in Northern Ireland. It provides information on the number of surveys carried out by each government department.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with 2022/23 financial year data is due to be published in Spring 2024.

Proposed change: This output will be suspended until further notice.

Date proposed change will come into effect: November 2023.

Overview of Northern Ireland Trade

This output includes an overview of Northern Ireland trade with Great Britain, Ireland, the Rest of the European Union and the Rest of the World.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with a mixture of 2022 and 2023 data is due to be published in January 2024.

Proposed change: This output will be suspended until further notice. Headline figures will still be available via NISRA's [Data Portal](#), or via the [HMRC Regional Trade Statistics](#) pages.

Date proposed change will come into effect: November 2023.

Overview of Northern Ireland Trade with Great Britain

This output provides an overview on trade in goods and services between Northern Ireland and Great Britain using publicly available data from the NISRA Northern Ireland Economic Trade Statistics (formerly known as the Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics (BESES)). Headline figures will still be available via NISRA's [Data Portal](#), or via the [HMRC Regional Trade Statistics](#) pages

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with 2022 data is due to be published in January 2024.

Proposed change: This output will be suspended until further notice. Headline figures will still be available via NISRA's [Data Portal](#), or via the [HMRC Regional Trade Statistics](#) pages.

Date proposed change will come into effect: November 2023.

2. Outputs proposed to be scaled back in frequency or in their content

Below is a list of outputs that we are proposing to scale back in frequency or content. More detail on each proposal is available below.

- [Baby Names](#)
- [Northern Ireland Air Passenger Flow Statistics](#)
- [Northern Ireland Composite Economic Index \(NICEI\)](#)
- [Northern Ireland Economic Trade Statistics](#)
- [Northern Ireland Quarterly Construction Output Statistics](#)
- [Northern Ireland Quarterly Employment Survey](#)
- [Northern Ireland Quarterly Index of Production](#)
- [Northern Ireland Quarterly Index of Services](#)
- [Northern Ireland Quarterly Retail Sales Index](#)
- [Traffic Counts of Vehicles at the Fifteen Main Northern Ireland-Ireland Border Crossing Locations](#)

Baby Names

This output presents the most popular names given to babies whose birth was registered in Northern Ireland each calendar year and includes all live births to both resident and non-resident mothers.

Current planned next release date: March 2024.

Proposed change: The online and hard copy commentary report will no longer be produced but the data tables will continue to be published.

Date proposed change will come into effect: March 2024.

[Northern Ireland Air Passenger Flow Statistics](#)

This output provides information on the passenger throughput of local airports as well as information on Northern Ireland residents using airports in the Republic of Ireland.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with data up to September 2023 is due to be published on 7th September 2023.

Proposed change: These are currently published quarterly, however it is proposed to scale this back to annual updates.

Date proposed change will come into effect: December 2023.

[Northern Ireland Composite Economic Index \(NICEI\)](#)

This output is an experimental quarterly measure of the performance of the Northern Ireland economy based on available official statistics.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with data for Quarter 2 2023 is due to be published on 28th September 2023.

Proposed change: The statistical bulletin will be reduced to headline results only; some detailed analysis and economic commentary will be removed. The bulletin will be reduced from 19 pages to approximately 5 pages. Data will continue to be provided in the existing supplementary tables, with the number of supplementary tables remaining the same (approximately 12 tables).

Date proposed change will come into effect: 11th January 2024.

[Northern Ireland Economic Trade Statistics](#)

This output measures both the sales and purchases of goods and services by Northern Ireland businesses in the non-financial business sectors on an annual basis.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with 2022 data is due to be published in December 2023.

Proposed change: The statistical bulletin for the 2022 reference year will be reduced from 30 pages to approximately 6 pages with limited commentary. Data will continue to be published on NISRA's [Data Portal](#).

Date proposed change will come into effect: December 2023.

[Northern Ireland Quarterly Construction Output Statistics](#)

This output provides a general measure of quarterly changes in the volume and value of construction output in Northern Ireland.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with data for Quarter 2 2023 is due to be published on 28th September 2023.

Proposed change: The statistical bulletin will be reduced to headline results only; analysis of subsectors will be removed. The bulletin will be reduced from 17 pages to approximately 5 pages. Data will continue to be provided in the existing supplementary tables; however, the following sections will be discontinued – the Structure of Industry tables and the Standard Errors and Coefficients of Variation (CVs) tables. All other supplementary tables will remain the same.

Date proposed change will come into effect: 11th January 2024.

[Northern Ireland Quarterly Employment Survey](#)

This output provides short-term employee jobs estimates for Northern Ireland.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with data for Quarter 2 2023 is due to be published on 12th September 2023.

Proposed change: The statistical bulletin will be reduced to headline results only; some further analysis will be removed (for example Composition of Employee Jobs (Full-time/Part-time) and UK Comparisons). The bulletin will be reduced from 25 pages to approximately 5 pages. Data will continue to be provided in the existing supplementary tables, with the number of supplementary tables remaining the same (approximately 15 tables).

Date proposed change will come into effect: 12th December 2023.

[Northern Ireland Quarterly Index of Production](#)

This output provides information on the output of the production industries, manufacturing industries and market trends.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with data for Quarter 2 2023 is due to be published on 14th September 2023.

Proposed change: The statistical bulletin will be reduced to headline results only and analysis of subsectors (for example manufacturing) will also be removed. The bulletin will be reduced from 23 pages to approximately 5 pages. Data will continue to be provided in the existing supplementary tables, with the number of supplementary tables remaining the same (approximately 20 tables).

Date proposed change will come into effect: 14th December 2023.

[Northern Ireland Quarterly Index of Services](#)

This output provides information on the latest seasonally adjusted estimates from the Northern Ireland Index of Services.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with data for Quarter 2 2023 is due to be published on 14th September 2023.

Proposed change: The statistical bulletin will be reduced to headline results only. The bulletin will be reduced from 17 pages to approximately 5 pages. Additionally, the Retail Sales Index statistics will be included in this bulletin rather than a separate one – see section below. Data will continue to be provided in the existing supplementary tables, with the number of supplementary tables remaining the same (15 Index of Services tables and 5 Retail Sales Index tables).

Date proposed change will come into effect: 14th December 2023.

[Northern Ireland Quarterly Retail Sales Index](#)

This output provides information on the output of the private retail service industries in Northern Ireland. This output is an experimental series which is a subset of the overall Index of Services

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with data for Quarter 2 2023 is due to be published on 14th September 2023.

Proposed change: The statistical bulletin will no longer be produced, the Retail Sales Index headline figures and scaled back commentary will be included in the Index of Services bulletin. The Retail Sales Index supplementary tables will continue to be published along with the Index of Services output (approximately 5 tables).

Date proposed change will come into effect: 14th December 2023.

[Traffic Counts of Vehicles at the Fifteen Main Northern Ireland-Ireland Border Crossing Locations](#)

This output provides a summary of the volume of vehicles counted at the fifteen main Northern Ireland-Ireland border crossing locations from March 2013 onwards.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with August 2023 data is due to be published on 1st September 2023.

Proposed change: The monthly excel tables published on the NISRA website will be stopped, monthly data will continue to be released via NISRA's [Data Portal](#) every 6 months instead of monthly.

Date proposed change will come into effect: November 2023.

3. Outputs proposed to be delayed from their planned publication dates

Below is a list of outputs that we are proposing to delay. More detail on each proposal is available below.

- [Input-Output Analytical Tables & Multipliers report & associated tables](#)
- [Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry](#)
- [Northern Ireland Research & Development Survey](#)

- [Northern Ireland Visitor Attraction Survey](#)
- [Structure of the Northern Ireland Economy – Supply-Use Tables & associated publication](#)

[Input-Output Analytical Tables & Multipliers report & associated tables](#)

This output describes and quantifies the interdependent relationship between inputs and outputs within an economy. They are a useful tool which provide a framework for modelling economic impact and changes to the domestic economy.

A key output from this analysis is the production of multipliers which help to analyse direct relationships within the economy. Multipliers capture the idea that a change in the economy does not act in isolation, it ripples through other parts of the economy.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with 2019 data is due to be published in September 2023.

Proposed change: The publication for the 2020 reference year scheduled for December 2023 will be published in the second quarter of 2024.

Date proposed change will come into effect: December 2023.

[Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry](#)

This output is a key resource for measuring the size, performance and structure of the Northern Ireland non-financial business economy. It is a survey of businesses covering the Production, Construction, Distribution and Service industries plus an element of Agriculture and covers roughly two thirds of the total Northern Ireland economy.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with 2022 data is due to be published in December 2023.

Proposed Change: The statistical bulletin for the 2022 reference year will be delayed until January 2024 and be reduced in content from 28 pages to approximately 6 pages. However, high-level ABI results for turnover and purchases of Northern Ireland businesses will be published in December 2023 alongside the Northern Ireland Economic Trade Statistics. In January, we will publish the approximate Gross Value Added (aGVA) figures which are the headline indicators for the output.

Date proposed change will come into effect: December 2023.

[Northern Ireland Research & Development Survey](#)

This output provides information on the level of Research and Development activity in Northern Ireland.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with 2022 data is due to be published in November/December 2023.

Proposed change: The publication scheduled for November/December 2023 will be published in the first quarter of 2024.

Date proposed change will come into effect: November 2023.

Northern Ireland Visitor Attraction Survey

This output provides figures on the number of visitors to Northern Ireland attractions on an annual basis.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with 2023 data is due to be published in July 2024.

Proposed change: The publication for the 2023 reference year scheduled for July 2024 will be published at the end of 2024.

Date proposed change will come into effect: July 2024.

Structure of the Northern Ireland Economy – Supply-Use Tables & associated publication

This output provides a picture of the flows of products and services in the economy for a single year and provides an understanding of the components of annual current price GDP. They show the composition of uses and resources across institutional sectors and the inter-dependence of industries in order to reconcile the production, income and expenditure approaches to the measurement of GDP.

Current planned next release date: Statistical output with data for 2019 is due to be published on 31st August 2023.

Proposed change: The publication for the 2020 reference year scheduled for December 2023 will be published in the second quarter of 2024.

Date proposed change will come into effect: December 2023.