

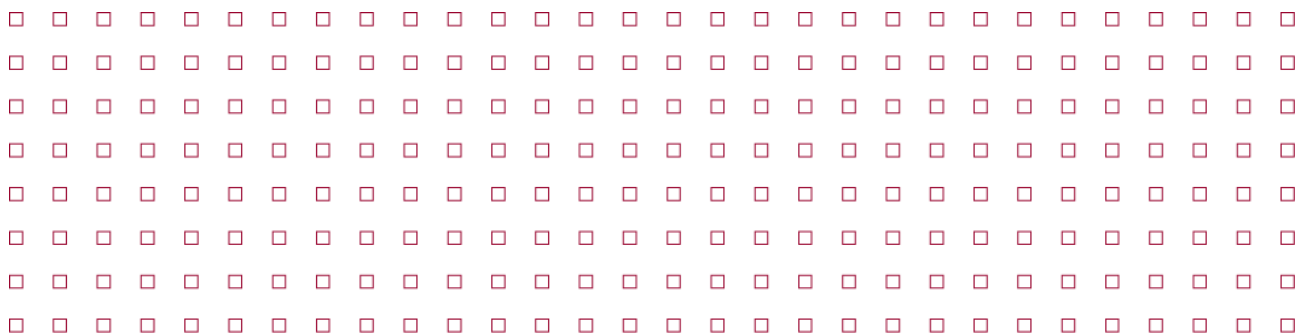


Ministry
of Justice

Ministry of Justice Statistical Policies and Procedures

Revisions Statement

November 2016



Introduction

The Ministry of Justice aims to provide a high quality and transparent statistical service covering the whole of the justice system to promote understanding and trust. This statement sets out our policy for revisions. This statement will apply to the Ministry of Justice and the following Ministry of Justice sponsored executive agencies, non-departmental public bodies and arm's-length bodies:

- National Offender Management Service
 - Her Majesty's Prison Service
 - National Probation Service
- Her Majesty's Court and Tribunals Service
- Legal Aid Agency
- Office of the Public Guardian
- Youth Justice Board for England and Wales
- Sentencing Council for England and Wales

It is one of five statistical policy statements explaining our statistical policies and procedures. The other statements are:

- Customer Service and Engagement statement
- Quality strategy, principles and processes
- Statement of compliance with Pre-release Access Order 2008
- Statement of administrative sources

These statements are located, along with this statement, at <http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/ministry-of-justice-statistics-policy-and-procedures>.

Principle 2 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics requires all producers of Official Statistics to publish transparent guidance on our policy for revisions. The Code of Practice can be found at www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk and was published in January 2009.

The Ministry of Justice aims to avoid the need for revisions to publications unless they are absolutely necessary and put systems and processes in place to minimise the number of revisions.

Within the Ministry of Justice's statistical publications, there can be three main reasons for statistics to be revised:

- changes in how either source administrative systems collect information or a change in statistical methodology to improve accuracy and measurement;

- receipt of subsequent information which alters our understanding of previous periods (for example – late recording on one of the administrative IT systems used operationally);
- errors in our statistical systems and processes.

Changes in source systems or statistical methodology

Where major changes to source administrative systems are pre-planned and for changes in statistical methods we will, where possible, consult with users on the changes and treat these as a change of methodology. We will consult on how best to record in the future and the options for maintaining a consistent time-series – including any revisions of previously held data.

Receipt of subsequent information

All administrative systems by their nature can update information previously held, e.g, the nature of the business process means that some information relating to a period already published is subsequently updated or revised or additional data are inputted.

However, the timing of each publication is designed to minimise the risk of the need for significant revisions due to this reason. Each Ministry of Justice publication will set out how the data held within this series will be revised in these circumstances.

Errors in statistical systems and processes

Occasionally, errors will occur in our statistical processes. We do everything we can to minimise these errors and continually review our processes and procedures to minimise this risk.

If an error of this nature occurs and it materially changes the context or substantially misreports headline figure(s) then a revision will be announced and published via an erratum at the earliest opportunity.

If the error is minor and does not change the context or misreport headline figures within reasonable rounding, the figures will be revised with the next publication. To be transparent the publication will describe where such revisions have occurred and why.

Where revisions are necessary the erratum or publication will give detailed and full explanations as to why the revisions were necessary and where appropriate, quantify their impact.

Handling of revisions

Our policy in handling revisions is to be transparent with users about:

- the need for revisions;
- how and when to expect revisions as part of our standard processes; and
- the processes by which other revisions will be communicated and published.

To meet these commitments, all of our statistical publications will:

- ensure that the need for major revisions for any series are pre-announced on the Ministry of Justice website;
- include a detailed revisions policy within every release; and
- detail how users will be informed of the need for revisions.

In addition, the annual report from the Head of Profession to the National Statistician will

- provide information on how many revisions were required to our publications and the reasons for these;
- publish a time-series of revisions due to errors in our statistical processes and procedures so we can monitor the quality of our outputs

Steve Ellerd-Elliott
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