



Department  
for Education

# **NEET Statistics Quarterly Brief, England**

**Technical document**

**May 2017**

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## Introduction

This document provides background information on the 'NEET Quarterly Brief' Statistical First Release (SFR). It explains concepts used in this publication and the method used to calculate estimates. It provides an overview of the data sources and other relevant information.

## Coverage

The data from all sources used in this publication cover young people who reside in England, and are based on the academic age as of 31<sup>st</sup> August. The publication contains individual age data between 16 and 24 years of age as well as summary age groups, 16-17, 16-18, 16-24, 18-24 and 19-24. There are also additional tables published with regional and gender breakdowns focussing on age groups 19-24, 18-24 and 16-24.

## Definitions

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A person is considered to be in education or training if any of the following apply	Enrolled on an education course and are still attending or waiting for term to (re)start Doing an apprenticeship On a government supported employment or training programme Working or studying towards a qualification, or Had job-related training or education in the last 4 weeks
In employment*	All people in some form of paid work, including those working part-time
Unemployed*	People who have been looking for work in the past 4 weeks and who are available to start work within the next 2 weeks
Economically inactive*	People who have not been looking for work and/or who are not available to start work. This includes those not looking for work because they are students and those who are looking after dependants at home
NEET	Anybody who is not in any of the forms of education or training listed above and who is not in employment is considered to be NEET. As a result, a person identified as NEET will always be either unemployed or economically inactive.

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\*The definitions of labour market status are based on those recommended by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

## Data Sources

### Labour Force Survey

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a survey of households living at private addresses in the UK. Its purpose is to provide information on the UK labour market which can then be used to develop, manage, evaluate and report on labour market policies. In England, the survey is managed by the Social Surveys division of the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

NEET and NET estimates are calculated using a harmonised methodology agreed between ONS, the Department for Education (DfE), the old Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

NEET estimates are calculated by first deriving a variable to distinguish those in education or training (ET) from those not in education or training (NET). Then by cross tabulating the derived ET/NET variable by economic status (in employment, unemployed or economically inactive), a NEET estimate can be calculated.

Full details about the Harmonised NEET Methodology are published in the technical specification: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/201110/Technical\\_Note\\_for\\_ONS\\_harmonised\\_measure\\_of\\_NEET\\_Final.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/201110/Technical_Note_for_ONS_harmonised_measure_of_NEET_Final.pdf)

These series are quarterly estimates of NEET and NET amongst young people from the LFS and the results are not directly comparable with DfE's definitive measure found in the Participation SFR (more information on this below).

The estimates provide more timely data on the recent trends in NEET and NET compared to the Participation SFR which is published annually. Trends however should be assessed by comparing the current time period with the same time period in the previous year, to account for seasonal effects. For example, October-December figures should not be compared with January-March figures. In addition the NET series should be used as context for any NEET data.

More information about the LFS in general can be found in the ONS used guide: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/labour-market/labour-market-statistics/index.html>

### NEET and NET Participation SFR series

This publication contains estimates for the participation of 16 to 18 year olds in education, training and employment in England. The estimates relate to a snapshot of activities at the end of the calendar year.

Information is drawn together from various post-16 data sources to give a coherent and comprehensive picture of participation, including schools, further education, work-based learning and higher education.

The primary sources for the SFR are:	The Schools' Census Pupil Level Annual Schools' Census The Individualised Learner Record (ILR) Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Higher Education Students Early Statistics (HESES) Labour Force Survey Mid-year estimates and projections of population from the Office for National Statistics (ONS)
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The key analyses are by age, gender, type of learning, institution type, labour market status and highest qualification being studied.

These are the Department for Education's definitive measures of participation for 16 to 18 year olds, and sets recent changes in the context of historical trends. These measures are used to monitor progress against the

Department's objectives of raising participation and reducing the number of young people NEET (not in education, employment or training).

For further information please see the technical document alongside the [Participation in Education, Training and Employment by 16-18 year olds in England: 2015 SFR](#).

## Other published sources

### Client Caseload Information System Regional NEET

These figures are an estimate of the number and proportion of 16 to 18 year olds who are NEET in each local authority in England.

The estimates relate to a 3 month average snapshot estimate of the regional NEET rate taken from the Local Authority Client Caseload Information System (CCIS) data.

These estimates are not directly comparable to LFS or Participation SFR. The estimates depend on the quality of each local authority's data collection. The data only includes young people who are known to their local authority (usually those who were educated in government-funded schools).

Estimates of NEET in the CCIS data tend to be lower than those estimated from the LFS or in the Participation SFR.

For more information go to the NEET data by local authority webpage:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/neet-data-by-local-authority-2012-16-to-18-year-olds-not-in-education-employment-or-training>

## Time series compatibility

The first LFS in the UK was conducted in 1973 and the survey was carried out every two years in the spring quarter (March-May) until 1983. Between 1984 and 1991 the survey was carried out annually and consisted of two elements: a quarterly survey of approximately 15,000 private households, conducted in Great Britain throughout the year and a "boost" survey in the spring quarter between March and May, of over 44,000 private households in Great Britain and 5,200 households in Northern Ireland. In 1992 the sample in Great Britain was increased to cover 60,000 households every quarter enabling quarterly publication of LFS estimates.

Prior to spring 2000, the 'QULNOW' variable (currently working/study towards qualification indicator), was not fully populated. A comparable time series is therefore only available from Q2 2000. However, it should be noted that due to changes in the LFS questionnaire over time, different versions of syntax are required to create this comparable time series.

## Reweighting

Labour Force Survey (LFS) datasets are routinely reweighted in line with population estimates. In May 2017 a new weighting variable was introduced, PWT17, to LFS datasets from July - September 2012 onwards. More information about the impact of the reweighting on the NEET and NET rates is available in an additional spreadsheet published with this [January to March 2017 quarterly brief](#).

## Sampling variability

Surveys, such as the LFS, provide estimates of population characteristics rather than exact measures. In principle, many random samples could be drawn and each would give different results, due to the fact that each sample would be made up of different people, who would give different answers to the questions asked. The spread of these results is the sampling variability, which generally reduces with increasing sample size. For example, with a 95% confidence interval, it is expected that in 95% of the survey samples, the resulting confidence interval will contain the true value that would be obtained by surveying the whole population.

Confidence intervals based on simple random sampling are presented in the quarterly brief to give an approximation of the sampling variability.

### Statistical significance

If a comparison between two estimates is statistically significant, we can be 95% sure that the change reflects reality and is not a result of sampling variability.

### Rounding

Numbers produced purely from the LFS are rounded to the nearest thousand as they are estimates based on survey data and weighted to population estimates. Numbers published within the participation SFR series are rounded to the nearest hundred as they are based largely on administrative sources. Because of rounding, totals in text and in tables may not always equal the sum of their component parts. Similarly, differences quoted in text may not always be the same as differences shown in tables. Where any number is shown as zero the original figure was zero. Where a number rounds to zero, the figure has been replaced by a '-'. This suppression and rounding is consistent with Departmental statistical policy.

Percentages are rounded to one decimal place. Changes in percentages are calculated on unrounded data therefore percentage point changes quoted in the text may not always be the same as differences calculated from published tables.

### Underlying data provided alongside publications

From the April to June 2010 quarter publication, each SFR has been accompanied by underlying data:

File name	Content
DfE_SFRxx_20xx_Processing_ NEET_NET_Quarterly_LFS_Qx-20xx.xls	SPSS syntax SPSS output SPSS Output Processing (headline numbers and proportions)
DfE_SFRxx_20xx_Dataset_ NEET_NET_Quarterly_LFS_UD_Qx-20xx	Quarterly time series from Q2 2000 Individual ages 16 to 24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEET number (unrounded)</li> <li>• NET number (unrounded)</li> <li>• Population (unrounded)</li> </ul>
DfE_SFRxx_20xx_Table_ NEET_Quarterly_LFS_UD_Qx-20xx	Quarterly time series from Q2 2000 For age groups 16,17,18,16-17,16-18,16-24,18-24,19-24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEET Quarterly LFS numbers (unrounded)</li> <li>• Quarterly LFS population numbers (unrounded)</li> <li>• NEET Quarterly LFS proportion (unrounded)</li> </ul>
DfE_SFRxx_20xx_Table_ NET_Quarterly_LFS_UD_Qx-20xx	Quarterly time series from Q2 2000 For age groups 16,17,18,16-17,16-18,16-24,18-24,19-24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NET Quarterly LFS numbers (unrounded)</li> <li>• Quarterly LFS population numbers (unrounded)</li> </ul> NET Quarterly LFS proportion (unrounded)

This data is released under the terms of the Open Government License and is intended to meet at least 3 stars for Open Data.

## Uses of data

The main use of these statistics is to provide Ministers, government departments and the wider public a comprehensive picture of the latest trends in NET and NEET across the range of sources available.

## Revisions

We do not plan to make any revisions to this publication. If we later discover that a revision is necessary, this will be made in accordance with our revisions policy. However, the latest Participation SFR figures included in the publication are provisional. When the figures are finalised for the previous year, these revisions are reflected in future NEET Statistics Quarterly Briefs. In addition, the LFS is periodically re-weighted, which affects historical estimates. When such re-weighting takes place, a revised historical series will be reflected in the next NEET Statistics Quarterly Brief, but previous editions of the Brief will not be retrospectively revised. Hence, for the latest historical series only the most recent publication should be used.

## Publication timetable

Data	Period Covered	Published
<b>NEET Quarterly Brief</b> Data published 6 weeks after end of reporting period	Jan-Mar (Q1)	May
	Apr-Jun (Q2)	August
	Jul-Sep (Q3)	November
	Oct-Dec (Q4)	February
<b>Participation SFR</b>	End of year snapshot	Following June

## Feedback and user engagement

Feedback on methodology and presentation is welcomed and encouraged. If you have any comments on the information collected, the timing or format of our outputs or whether these statistics are meeting your requirements, please email: [post16.STATISTICS@education.gov.uk](mailto:post16.STATISTICS@education.gov.uk)



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write to Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London, TW9 4DU

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