

Compliance check: Transparency and communication of International Passenger Survey methods changes, delays and quality information

Summary

This report looks at the communications around the International Passenger Survey (IPS) related to methods changes implemented between September 2017 and April 2018. It looks at how changes to the IPS data collection methods were communicated in advance of their introduction, how ONS communicated delays to IPS publications, and how quality concerns were conveyed to enable appropriate use of IPS data collected during the transition period.

OSR welcomes the efforts made by ONS to innovate in the way that data is collected. Innovation is essential to enable statistics to meet changing user needs and ensure public value. There are many positive lessons from the work done by ONS on the IPS. For example, ONS has built up strong relationships with key users through the IPS Steering Group - a key communications channel - and ONS acted quickly to investigate issues with migration statistics including commissioning an independent investigation (by ONS Methodology). The summary quality information ONS published in July 2018 also provided users with a clear summary of the identified issues and future IPS development plans.

However, there were also a number of areas where we and ONS identified potential for improvement. These primarily relate to how ONS communicated with external users who were not part of the IPS Steering Group, both in advance of methods changes and when delays and quality concerns arose. For example, when ONS first raised concerns, in its March 2018 publication of Overseas Travel and Tourism, it highlighted that due to the quality concerns identified ONS had taken the decision that the data would not be used in key ONS outputs stating, "data will not be used in headline trade or other national accounts estimates". While we welcome the transparency in highlighting the concerns, it provided little clarity for external users on how the data could be appropriately used.

OSR will monitor progress on the IPS over the coming months and plans to carry out a further compliance check of IPS tourism outputs following the publication of the final IPS 2018 data in 2019.

Summary of Findings

Finding 1: ONS has developed a strong relationship with the IPS Steering Group which allowed it to inform key users of changes and gain input into proposals.

Finding 2: ONS should have informed IPS statistics users outside the IPS Steering Group about the planned methods developments and the potential risks to the continuity and

timeliness of outputs. As a minimum, there should have been a public statement in a publication or on the website ahead of the changes being implemented.

Finding 3: There are a number of examples of good practice in communicating and implementing changes in methodology across the GSS. The Good Practice Team should ensure that lessons from these approaches are shared.

Finding 4: ONS communications of delays to migration were clear and supported users. The information on the work programme (published 24 May) provided valuable additional insight on long-term migration data.

Finding 5: ONS treated delays to tourism and migration outputs separately. ONS took this decision because the two issues were unrelated and it felt that referencing the other output was likely to cause confusion for the majority of users who only used one of the two outputs. However, this did create some uncertainty for a small number of expert users who wanted clarity about whether there was any link between the two issues.

Finding 6: The information on tourism data made publicly available did not provide sufficient notice of the delays or details of the reasons for the delays to IPS tourism statistics. It also lacked information on whether the issues leading to the delays had any implications for data that had already been published and how data that had already been published could be appropriately used. This contrasts with the more thorough and detailed information which was provided to the IPS Steering Group and internal ONS stakeholders and the more detailed tourism information which was available to users (including journalists) on request.

Finding 7: The extent of quality assurance required to IPS outputs following the mode transition was underestimated, leading to some tourism publications being delayed several times.

Finding 8: Changes to information about scheduled publications requested by output teams did not always feed through to the ONS and GOV.UK release calendars in a timely manner which led to partial and inconsistent information being provided to users. A forward schedule of IPS tourism outputs for the final quarter of 2018 is not currently listed on either the ONS and GOV.UK release calendars.

Finding 9: The July MSQR contained a useful summary of the nature and extent of the data processing issue on previous long-term migration estimates.

Finding 10: ONS acted quickly to investigate issues with migration statistics including commissioning an independent investigation (by ONS Methodology). The publication of its internal IPS quality review is a useful summary for users and demonstrates how to effectively communicate ad hoc quality management activities in a timely manner.

Finding 11: The information in ONS's travel and tourism statistics on methods changes and the impact on key series was not sufficient to allow users to understand where the data should be used with caution and where it could continue to be used with confidence. Data was published with notable changes to the time series and limited explanation. This undermined confidence in the data. Improved information on methods changes has now been published and we welcome plans to provide fuller details of the impact of the mode change once 12 months of tablet-based data has been collected.

Finding 12: Travel Trends 2017 does not mention the impact of correcting the weighting error introduced following the 2016, IPS sample optimisation review for published IPS tourism outputs (which ONS have now confirmed was very minor).

1. Introduction

This compliance check covers tourism and migration outputs from the International Passenger Survey (IPS). The results of the survey are widely used and feed into several National Statistics products. OSR welcomes ONS work to innovate in how it collects and presents data in the IPS. Innovation is essential to enable statistics to meet changing user needs and ensure public value. It allows statistical outputs to answer the key questions of the day and supports efficiencies which can reduce potential for errors and free up time for statisticians to spend more time analysing data and providing key insights. [Innovation](#) is encouraged through the Code of Practice for Statistics.

The focus of this compliance check is on how to effectively communicate when innovations are made. We hope that lessons from this experience will support effective communication when innovations are implemented across the GSS and encourage more organisations to communicate effectively when introducing new approaches to data collection and changes to outputs. The compliance check focuses on how changes to the IPS data collection methods were communicated in advance of their introduction, how ONS communicated resulting delays to IPS publications to its users, and the guidance ONS has issued to enable appropriate use of IPS data collected during the mode transition. Its findings are informed in particular by the *Code of Practice for Statistics* principles: [Transparent processes and management](#), [Orderly release](#), [Relevance to users](#), [Assured quality](#), [Clarity and insight](#) and [Innovation and improvement](#).

ONS implemented a programme to replace the IPS paper-based data collection with a new tablet-based approach. This represented a significant change to the established survey, with potential benefits for efficiency and data quality. While the changes were driven by the need for greater efficiency there were also anticipated benefits including; the ability for data collection to be carried out in a greater number of languages, with options for respondents to specify language preferences, and allowing easier survey updates. ONS also reports that IPS respondents seem to relate better to the tablet questionnaire layout.

The mode shift was rolled-out gradually between September 2017 and April 2018, with some in-house data processing changes in August 2017 to accommodate the tablet/paper dual-mode during the transition period.

In April 2018, OSR received [correspondence from NatCen's Chief Executive](#) which raised concerns about the quality of official UK tourism statistics following innovations to survey collection methods. This compliance check represents the first of two OSR projects set out in the Office for Statistics Regulation's [response to NatCen's Chief Executive](#). It goes wider than the original correspondence around tourism and covers IPS outputs more generally.

In this compliance check OSR has identified a number of findings and outlined some recommendations for ONS as the organisation responsible for running the IPS; many of the

lessons are also applicable across the GSS. It is clear that there are significant challenges in making changes to a survey and we welcome the efforts made by ONS to continue to innovate in the way data are collected. This continuous process of innovation should support ONS to better meet user needs and offer the best public value from its outputs.

2. Advance communication of IPS methods changes

Finding 1: ONS has developed a strong relationship with the IPS Steering Group which allowed it to inform key users of changes and gain input into proposals.

Finding 2: ONS should have informed IPS statistics users outside the IPS Steering Group about the planned methods developments and the potential risks to the continuity and timeliness of outputs. As a minimum, there should have been a public statement in a publication or on the website ahead of the changes being implemented.

Finding 3: There are a number of examples of good practice in communicating and implementing changes in methodology across the GSS. The Good Practice Team should ensure that lessons from these approaches are shared.

The IPS Steering Group is the key communication channel for ONS to inform users of the IPS about proposed changes to the survey and associated risks. It provides an opportunity to gain feedback on an ongoing basis. It is a cross government group made up of key users of IPS data and related publications, it also includes representatives of the wider user community. The IPS Steering Group includes representatives from ONS Migration Statistics; ONS National Accounts; ONS Methodology; Home Office; Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport; Department for Transport; Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs; Civil Aviation Authority; Visit Britain and Visit Scotland. This is an important communication channel which captures input from a large proportion of those interested in the IPS. We hope to see ONS continue to build on the positive relationships already made. ONS might consider whether extending the group's membership to include a broader range of external IPS statistics users could be useful.

Planning for the shift to tablet collection started several years ago. The team anticipated the need to fully understand the impact of the mode change. The IPS team told us that they were aware of the importance of the IPS for their users and recognised the need to manage the mode change carefully. Since early 2016 they have engaged with members of the IPS Steering Group about this.

The team tendered a contract in October 2016 to develop an adjustment method to ensure a smoothed time series for IPS tourism statistics either side of the transition, which was won by Southampton University. The intention is to move to the new unadjusted tablet data series from April 2019, once a full year of tablet data has been collected.

Despite the positive actions to pre-empt issues and engage with the IPS Steering Group, there was no public communication of the planned developments to methods or the planned strategy for handling any discontinuities in advance of the mode transition in Autumn 2017. This meant external users of the data had no way of learning about and inputting into the proposed changes.

Within the GSS, there are already good examples of the successful communication of methods changes. These include, for example, ONS [updates on improvements to its crime statistics for England and Wales](#), ONS [experimental work on web scraping price data](#); ONS [advance notice of changes to its GDP publishing model](#); Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's advance communication of changes to its [Statutory homelessness in England statistics](#), and its [explanation of the comparability of the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation with earlier versions of the index](#). This report also shows the ONS communications for its migration statistics were well executed, even at short notice. There would be benefit in ensuring that these, and other best practice ways of working during periods of innovation and development are widely shared across the GSS.

3. Communication of IPS publication delays

During 2018 there have been a number of delays to statistical outputs based on the IPS, including tourism and migration. The primary cause of the delays has been the change in data collection mode, however, the specific issues have varied. While on occasion delays are inevitable the communication around delays is important in informing users about when data will be available. Delays on migration (3.1) and tourism (3.2) outputs are described in more detail below. The communication of the delay for migration statistics has been clearer and more detailed than those for ONS's tourism outputs.

3.1 Migration statistics delays

Finding 4: ONS communications of delays to migration were clear and supported users. The information on the work programme (published 24 May) provided valuable additional insight on long-term migration data.

Finding 5: ONS treated delays to tourism and migration outputs separately. ONS took this decision because the two issues were unrelated and it felt that referencing the other output was likely to cause confusion for the majority of users who only used one of the two outputs. However, this did create some uncertainty for a small number of expert users who wanted clarity about whether there was any link between the two issues.

On 17 May 2018 ONS published a postponement to its [Migration Statistics Quarterly Report](#). This delay was announced one week prior to the planned publication date of 24 May 2018. The

notice was very clear about what would and would not be published on the 24 May and the fact that a full update on the work programme and proposed publication date would be published on 24 May.

ONS provided a more detailed [update on its overall programme of migration work](#) on Thursday 24th May. This provided a fuller explanation of the IPS mode transition continuity issues, and focused specifically on a coding error introduced to process paper based IPS data during the transition period. The document was a useful update for migration statistics. The notice provided a revised publication date of 16 July, explaining that the two-month period was required to adequately ensure data quality ahead of publication. The delayed Migration Statistics Quarterly Report was published on 16 July as planned.

Better information about the impacts of methods changes for IPS data and its appropriate interpretation more generally was addressed in the [further information published in July](#) (discussed in the Section 4).

The notices and explanations did not specify whether there was any link to the issues recently identified with the Overseas Travel and Tourism outputs, despite the proximity in timing of these being announced and the fact both are related to the IPS move from paper to tablet data collection. ONS identified that the issues with tourism and migration were distinct and took the decision that cross referencing tourism in the migration updates would cause confusion to those individuals who only access migration data – the higher profile of the two outputs. However, this did leave a small number of expert users with unanswered questions and concerns that the two separate issues were linked and indicative of a larger problem with the survey.

3.2 Tourism statistics delays

Finding 6: The information on tourism data made publicly available did not provide sufficient notice of the delays or details of the reasons for the delays to IPS tourism statistics. It also lacked information on whether the issues leading to the delays had any implications for data that had already been published and how data that had already been published could be appropriately used. This contrasts with the more thorough and detailed information which was provided to the IPS Steering Group and internal ONS stakeholders and the more detailed tourism information which was available to users (including journalists) on request.

Finding 7: The extent of quality assurance required to IPS outputs following the mode transition was underestimated, leading to some tourism publications being delayed several times.

Finding 8: Changes to information about scheduled publications requested by output teams did not always feed through to the ONS and GOV.UK release calendars in a timely manner which led to partial and inconsistent information being provided to users. A forward schedule of IPS

tourism outputs for the final quarter of 2018 is not currently listed on either the ONS and GOV.UK release calendars.

We welcome the additional quality assurance undertaken on the IPS data following the change in mode this did impact on the timing of the release of a number of publications. However, this resulted in delays to confirmed and provisional monthly Overseas Travel and Tourism statistics, and a three-month delay to the annual 2017 Travel Trends bulletin.

The IPS team updated key users. For example, IPS Steering Group members were informed about delays via meetings and correspondence and the IPS team took up an opportunity to brief interested tourism industry users through a meeting organised by Visit Britain.

However, external users had less timely and informative updates. Communication about delays was limited to brief explanations in ONS and GOV.UK release calendars. For example the [August 2017](#) release was postponed from October 2017 to November 2017 with the explanation simply stating “Operational reasons” and the [October 2017](#) release was postponed from November 2017 to December 2017 stating “Further quality assurance needed”. There were also no notices to explain the delays to the provisional 2018 statistics and no indication as to whether issues that had arisen may also have impacted on data which had previously been published.

The IPS team told us that they prepared a briefing for use by the media relations team in case there were queries about the delays. Some journalists and users from commercial organisations made direct contact to find out more about the delays and when data would be available. This briefing was a really valuable addition to the information available to users and it is not clear why the information was not made publicly available to all users.

On 15 June, the Deputy National Statistician [Iain Bell wrote to OSR’s Director General for Regulation](#) to address some of the concerns raised by NatCen’s Chief Executive. It explains that ONS had not made sufficient information available to all users via the ONS. The letter stated that going forward ONS would ensure the widest range of users were aware of the publication timetable and that regular updates on the work would be provided. These are positive steps to support transparency.

Since 15 June, further delays have occurred. In particular, the 2017 Travelpac of detailed IPS data and the detailed tables that accompany the annual Travel Trends bulletin were delayed twice from 20 July and then from 3 August, they were published on 17 August. The [January to March 2018 results](#) were further postponed until 5 September. The [TravelPac 2017 webpage](#) showed a more extensive explanation for the latest delay than the previous delay. However, there was still no explanation of the scale of concern or whether it had a potential impact on past outputs.

We found that changes to IPS release dates were not always appearing on the ONS or GOV.UK websites in a timely manner. While it appears that updates were requested by the IPS

team, changes were not made to the release calendar in a timely way. Given the importance of the release calendar as a tool to communicate with external users, ONS should review its process for updating the release calendar to ensure updates do not get missed or delayed.

Updates to the ONS release calendar should feed through to the GOV.UK release calendar. However, in some instances updates were not reflected in the GOV.UK statistical release calendar. For example, on 30 July 2018, GOV.UK showed January 2018 data as having been published on 20 April, while the ONS release calendar shows it as scheduled for 5 September, shown at Annex B. This is not an isolated example with issues also applying to the February 2018 provisional data, Q1: January to March IPS data, and the May 2018 provisional results.

There are also currently no forward scheduled IPS tourism outputs based on data collected in for the final quarter of 2018 listed on either release calendar, despite them being expected within the next twelve months.

These inconsistencies have resulted in partial and inconsistent information being provided to users who are dependent on release calendar updates as their sole source of information about IPS scheduling changes.

While the scope of this compliance check is on the communication of the delays, rather than the cause or need for outputs to be delayed, ONS may wish to consider the wider lessons that can be learnt. For example, about how to manage issues when they arise and whether additional resource should have been allocated to the IPS for the short term to support transition period and the resulting need for increased quality assurance.

4. Communication of IPS data quality issues

This section covers how data quality issues relating to IPS outputs were conveyed. As with the areas outlined in sections 2 and 3 it covers migration and tourism outputs.

4.1 Migration quality information

Finding 9: The July MSQR contained a useful summary of the nature and extent of the data processing issue on previous long-term migration estimates.

Finding 10: ONS acted quickly to investigate issues with migration statistics including commissioning an independent investigation (by ONS Methodology). The publication of its internal IPS quality review is a useful summary for users and demonstrates how to effectively communicate ad hoc quality management activities in a timely manner.

The Migration Statistics Quarterly Report (MSQR) [published on 16 July](#), contained a helpful summary of the data processing issue introduced during the tablet transition period. It also

included an accessible account of the nature and extent of the impact of the issue on previously published long-term migration estimates for the year ending June 2017, the year ending September 2017 and related population outputs.

The MSQR also included a [report on international migration data sources: July 2018](#). This included information about the findings of an independent investigation of the broader IPS quality carried out by ONS Methodology. The review was commissioned by ONS Social Surveys following the discovery of the coding error designed to combine paper and tablet data over the transition period.

The review covered:

- The extent of data issues – long-term migration data collected during the mode transition period, including data for year ending September 2017.
- The scale of the correction for the data for year ending September 2017 i.e. the data which had already been published, and noting that when compared with data for a year earlier, there was no statistically significant difference.
- Other relevant data or processing issues and the extent of these – for example that June 2017 and September 2017 data had been affected by a small weighting error introduced following the IPS sample optimisation review carried out in October 2016.

The overall conclusion of the quality review was that while the inherent limitations of using IPS data to estimate migration remain, the sampling, processing, editing and weighting processes were confirmed as robust and free from error. ONS should be commended for being transparent in publishing details of the review including findings beyond the original scope of the review. The publication represents a useful summary for users and demonstrates how to effectively communicate quality management activities to users in a timely manner.

4.2 Tourism quality information

Finding 11: The information on methods changes and the impact on key series was not sufficient to allow users to understand where the data should be used with caution and where it could continue to be used with confidence. Data was published with notable changes to the time series and limited explanation. This undermined confidence in the data. Improved information on methods changes has now been published and we welcome plans to provide fuller details of the impact of the mode change once 12 months of tablet-based data has been collected.

Finding 12: Travel Trends 2017 does not mention the impact of correcting the weighting error introduced following the 2016 IPS sample optimisation review for published IPS tourism outputs (which ONS have now confirmed was very minor).

The IPS team told us that they raised their concerns about provisional data quality with the IPS Steering Group as early as possible, with some members being directly involved in the quality assurance process. While it is clear the IPS team engaged well with the IPS Steering Group and worked well with them to develop a strategy for managing potential discontinuities, broader users would have benefited from more information at an early stage.

Potential quality concerns with IPS mode transition data were first raised externally in the March 2018 publication, as a note in the combined [November and December Overseas Travel and Tourism](#) bulletin. The publication highlighted concerns with comparisons of expenditure over time, due to evidence that methods changes had led to different expenditure amounts being collected. The notice said that ONS is working to understand the impact of the discontinuities on other ONS estimates and that the new data would not be used in headline trade or national accounts series until there is a consistent trend on the new basis.

We considered this notice well intentioned, but it provided little clarity about how the statistics that were published might be used appropriately, especially given the notice said the data was not going to be used in key ONS outputs due to the concerns raised. This undermined confidence in the transitional IPS data. There was also no information on the mode change in the IPS Quality and Methodology Information (QMI). The IPS revisions policy is clear that monthly and quarterly results are provisional until finalised in the annual Travel Trends bulletin.

ONS has now published methods information regarding the mode change. On 20 July ONS published an article: [Travel trends 2017: recent data collection changes and planned methodological changes](#). It outlines further work undertaken and confirms that, when final results for 2017 are considered, there is no detectable impact from the mode change. It also states that the impact of the processing error on the Travel and Tourism results was within the range expected for provisional compared with final results. The article does not mention any potential impact of the weighting error introduced following the 2016, IPS sample optimisation review for published IPS tourism outputs, which the IPS team has since confirmed to be very minor.

The IPS team said that a full account of the scale, nature and extent of any discontinuity for the 2018 transition period estimates will not be understood until the actual impact of the changes can be measured, thought to be once 12 months of tablet data has been collected. At that point, the team also plan to publish details of any methodological adjustment used to ensure a consistent time series over the transition period. The team will update the IPS Steering Group in October 2018 and keep users (including external users) informed about methods developments, such as the extent of any required adjustment to the transition data, via the statistical bulletin.

The IPS team provided us with information about other future developments plans, including addressing a known imbalance between sampling visitors from certain countries at the start of their trips rather than at the end of their visits; moving the IPS to new data access platform; and

transferring the IPS weighting from SAS to Python. We welcome the focus on continued improvement to the survey and the way the IPS Steering Group have been able to input into IPS development priorities. We also welcome the external update which has now been provided as part of the July 2018 publication.

5. Recommendations and next steps

Through this review of transparency and communication of the International Passenger Survey in relation to implementing methods changes, we have found some positive examples of how to communicate with users, for example:

- ONS has developed a strong relationship with the IPS Steering Group which allowed it to inform key users of changes and gain input into proposals.
- Communications of delays to migration were clear and supported users well.
- The July MSQR contained a useful summary of the nature and extent of the data processing issue on previous long-term migration estimates.
- ONS acted quickly to investigate issues with migration statistics including commissioning an independent investigation (by ONS Methodology). The report in July 2018 provides users with a clear summary of the issues identified and future IPS developments.
- Improved information on methods changes has now been published and we welcome plans to provide fuller details of the impact of the mode change once 12 months of tablet-based data has been collected.

More generally we welcome ONS's work to innovate in how it collects and presents data. Innovation is essential to enable statistics to meet changing user needs and ensure public value. Particular strengths were the way ONS considered how necessary changes to the IPS to improve efficiency could also feed into benefits for those being surveyed (through clearer questions and more language choices) and the early engagement of academics to develop an adjustment method to ensure a smoothed time series for IPS tourism statistics either side of the transition.

However, there were also a number of areas where we and ONS identified potential for improvement. Users should be at the centre of considerations around publication of updates and outputs with information provided to promote transparency and confidence in the data. For example, it is essential that users have clarity about limitations with published data, to ensure outputs can be used appropriately and users can have confidence in the way data inform their decision making. More could have been done to provide this clarity to users outside ONS and the IPS Steering Group.

While the lessons from this compliance check are highlighted in the context of the ONS IPS they are applicable to innovation across the GSS. To support best practice in future statistical innovations, ONS should:

- Engage with a broad range of users about forward development plans prior to finalising them to ensure statistical developments can be informed by user views.
- Commit to making information available to external users prior to methods changes being introduced.
- Acknowledge and communicate to users how quality and timeliness will be managed during developmental changes, particularly when introduced at pace.
- When delays occur, include full and timely explanations of the reasons for delays on the website. Where relevant, information on whether there is any impact on previously published data and guidance on how this data can be used should also be published.
- Provide clarity around the appropriate use of published data to support user confidence – particularly where quality concerns are highlighted.
- Ensure channels to keep users informed about progress are working as expected. This should include reviewing the process of updating the ONS and GOV.UK release calendars and ensuring these are being updated.
- Consider what steps can be taken to improve planning to avoid the need to make multiple postponements to statistical outputs.

The Good Practice Team should:

- Find ways to spread best practice in communicating and implementing statistical innovations and developments, learning from successful examples across the GSS.

OSR will monitor progress in published IPS data over the coming months. OSR currently plans to carry out a further compliance check of IPS tourism outputs following the publication of the final IPS 2018 data in 2019, once any final discontinuity adjustments have been enacted.

Annex A: Summary of IPS Tourism Release Delays

There have been delays to confirmed and provisional monthly and annual Overseas Travel and Tourism statistics. These include one-month delays for the Q4, 2017 Overseas Travel and Tourism statistics and delays to the for the annual Travel Trends 2017 bulletin, which moved from a provisional date of 20 May, to 20 July 2018. The detailed 2017 Travelpac tables which accompany Travel Trends have also been delayed three times, from 20 April to 20 July, then from 20 July to 3 August, and most recently from 3 August to 17 August. The publication of monthly and Q1 2018 Overseas Travel and Tourism statistics were also delayed several times, and eventually published on 5 September 2018.

On 15 June, the Deputy National Statistician [Jain Bell wrote to OSR's Director General for Regulation](#) to identify that while ONS had indicated provisional publication dates for its IPS tourism statistics, it had not updated these with firm dates and had not made sufficient information available to all users via the ONS website. This was an issue that he said had since been resolved. His letter also set out the delays to IPS tourism statistics at the time:

1. Provisional results for August, September and October 2017 were published a month late
2. December was published with November in March 2018
3. Data for January, February March 2018 will also be published later than usual, in June 2018 (although this was later delayed until 2 August, and was further [postponed until 5 September](#))

The letter stated that ONS would ensure the widest range of users were aware of the publication timetable and that regular updates on the work would be provided.

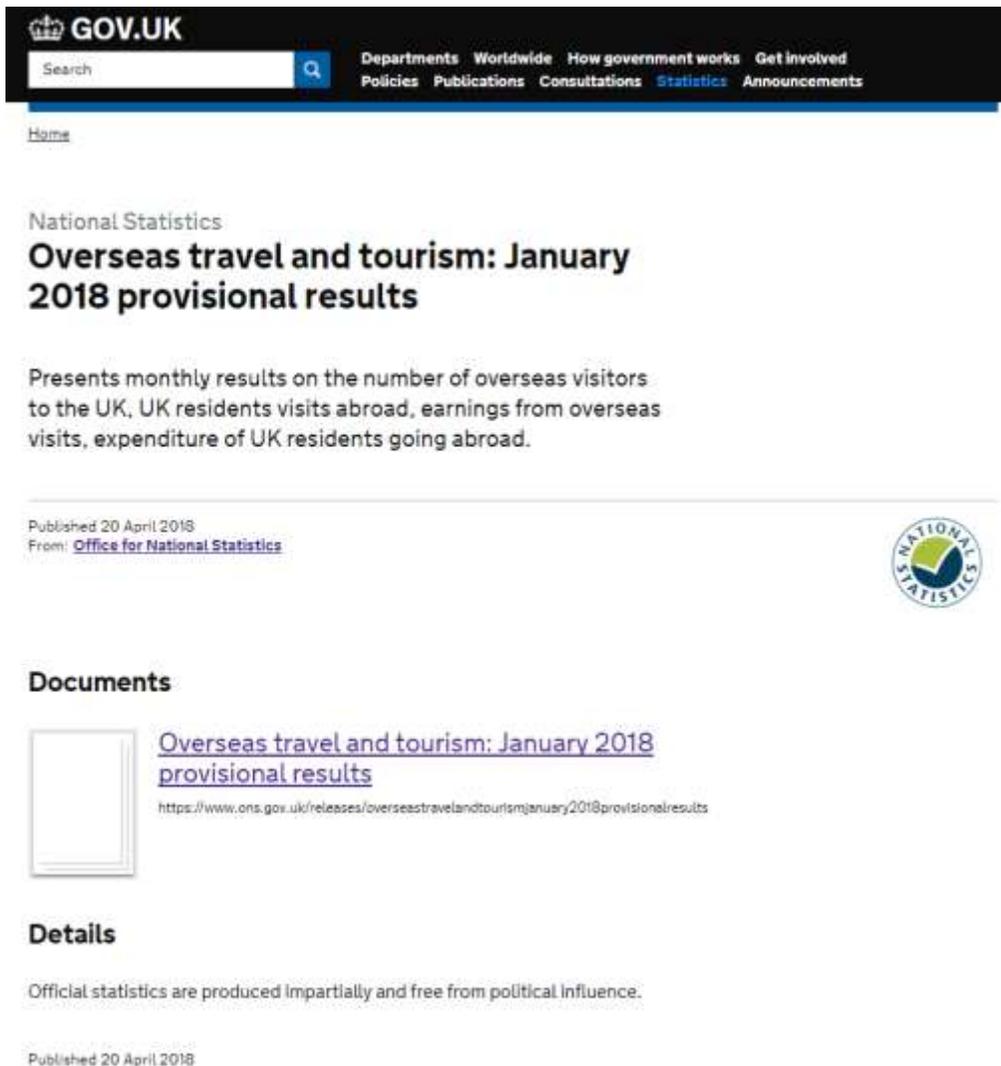
Since 15 June, further delays include: the 2017 Travelpac of detailed IPS data and the detailed tables that accompany the annual Travel Trends bulletin, [delayed until 17 August](#), and January to March 2018 results being postponed until 5 September. The further postponements indicate that the extent of additional quality assurance required following the mode transition has been underestimated. The demands of the continuous monthly, quarterly and annual IPS publication schedule is likely to have contributed to difficulties in the IPS team catching-up after initial delays at the end of 2017.

Annex B: Differences between GOV.UK and ONS release calendar IPS outputs listings (as of 30 July 2018)

Annex B shows inconsistencies in publication announcements across GOV.UK and ONS websites. It shows how January 2018 data on GOV.UK is listed as having been published on 20 April, whereas the ONS release calendar shows it as scheduled for 5 September.

The same issue applied to the February 2018 provisional data and Q1, January to March IPS data which is shown as published on 12 July on GOV.UK. The May 2018 provisional results are showing as published on 20 July on GOV.UK, but do not appear on the ONS release calendar at all.

1. GOV.UK notice stating IPS results for January were published 20 April 2018



The screenshot shows the GOV.UK website header with a search bar and navigation links. The main content area features the title 'Overseas travel and tourism: January 2018 provisional results' and a brief description. Below this, it states the publication date as 20 April 2018 and the source as the Office for National Statistics. A 'Documents' section contains a link to the document with the URL <https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/overseastravelandtourismjanuary2018provisionalresults>. A 'Details' section at the bottom notes that official statistics are produced impartially and free from political influence, and also lists the publication date as 20 April 2018.

2. Broken link from GOV.UK January 2018 listing page to ONS website

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Office for National Statistics website. It includes the ONS logo, language options for English (EN) and Cymraeg (CY), and links for Release calendar, Methodology, Media, About, and Blog. Below this is a horizontal menu with categories: Home, Business, industry and trade, Economy, Employment and labour market, People, population and community, and Taking part in a survey?. A search bar is located below the menu, with the placeholder text 'Search for a keyword(s) or time series ID' and a magnifying glass icon.

404 - The webpage you are requesting does not exist on the site

The page may have been moved, updated or deleted or you may have typed the web address incorrectly, please check the url and spelling. Alternatively, please try the search, or return to the homepage and use the sitemap.

If you still encounter problems please contact us. We apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused.

3. ONS calendar notice stating January provisional results will be published on 5 September 2018

The screenshot shows a page on the ONS website. At the top is the ONS logo and navigation links. Below the search bar is a breadcrumb trail: Home > Release calendar > Upcoming > Overseas travel and tourism: January to March 2018 provisional. The main heading reads 'Release: Overseas travel and tourism: January to March 2018 provisional'. A dark grey banner below the heading states 'This release is not yet published'. At the bottom, there is a table with contact information and release dates.

 Contact:	Release date: 5 September 2018	Next release: To be announced
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Quarterly results on overseas visitors to the UK, visits abroad by UK residents, earnings from overseas visits and expenditure of UK residents abroad. Data collected from the International Passenger Survey.