



Office for
Statistics Regulation



UK Statistics
Authority

Review of compliance with the Code of
Practice for Statistics

Labour Market Overview

Statistics producer: Welsh Government

Report by: Office for Statistics Regulation

June 2026

The Office for Statistics Regulation

Statistics should serve everyone, helping enhance knowledge about every section of society and the economy, and people's place within them.

The Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) provides independent regulation of official statistics produced in the UK. Official statistics are statistics produced by Crown bodies and other organisations listed within an [Official Statistics Order](#), on behalf of the UK Government or the devolved governments.

We aim to enhance public confidence in statistics produced by government by setting the standards that they must meet in [the Code of Practice for Statistics](#). We ensure that producers uphold these standards by conducting reviews of statistics against the Code. We also report publicly on system-wide issues and on the way statistics are being used, celebrating when the standards are upheld and challenging publicly when they are not.

Compliance review

A compliance review is a review of any official statistics (or [accredited official statistics](#)) to establish the extent to which they meet the standards of Trustworthiness, Quality and Value in the Code of Practice for Statistics. We might undertake a review with a view to accrediting a set of statistics (this type of compliance review is called an assessment), focus on a specific issue or involve a high-level check of ongoing compliance.

A range of factors determine the scope of and approach to a compliance review, including the type of statistics, their accreditation status, the producer history, the profile of the statistics and the reasons for initiating the review.

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Overview

At the time of this report, the monthly [Labour Market Overview](#) statistical bulletin is published as official statistics by the Welsh Government.

The monthly Labour Market Overview provides various labour market data, sourced from ONS's Labour Force Survey (LFS), Annual Population Survey (APS) and workforce jobs statistics, HMRC's Pay As You Earn Real Time Information statistics and DWP's claimant count statistics. These outputs provide information relating to the Welsh labour market, such as employment, unemployment and economic inactivity.

This review makes recommendations to strengthen the compliance of the estimates with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

Why we did this review

In May 2024, we wrote a [letter](#) to the Chief Statistician of the Welsh Government, agreeing to their request to suspend the accreditation of their monthly Labour Market Overview statistics. The Welsh Government requested this suspension in response to ONS's decision to suspend the accreditation of its LFS-based estimates, as these LFS data were also used in the Welsh Government's monthly Labour Market Overview outputs.

The Chief Statistician asked OSR to conduct this review with a specific focus on how effectively the Labour Market Overview communicates quality and uncertainty, and the appropriate use of different labour market data sources. Given the public interest in this statistical bulletin, we reviewed it against the Standards for Official Statistics and engaged with the statistics team as part of the review process to highlight areas which would further strengthen adherence with the Code in the future.

As this is not a full reassessment, and ONS LFS-based estimates remain suspended, there is no change to the accreditation status of the Labour Market Overview produced by Welsh Government. We have not reviewed the underlying statistics included in it and so there is also no change to their accreditation status.

Findings

- The bulletin shows progress in communicating the quality of the statistics, for example, highlighting known quality issues and using multiple data sources to form judgements on the labour market in Wales. The Chief Statistician has also written an accessible blog highlighting recent improvements and developments around measuring the labour market in Wales.
- The bulletin provides analysis and indicators on key labour market topics such as employment, unemployment and economic inactivity in Wales. The bulletin clearly

explains what each dataset should be used for, supporting users to interpret the data and choose the most appropriate information for their needs.

- User views have informed the development of the statistics. For example, the bulletin has been reduced from 37 pages to 27 pages, after users voiced support for this during a consultation in spring 2026. A link to the results of the consultation is provided in the bulletin, so users can see how their views have been considered.
- Some of the supporting material in the bulletin is out of date. The Welsh Government plans to publish a separate quality information report to improve the accessibility of the main bulletin and keep the supporting material relevant.
- To enable users to choose the best data for their needs, the Welsh Government has clearly indicated if the data sources are Accredited Official Statistics (AOS), Official Statistics or Official Statistics in Development (OSID). However, additional clarity in other areas would improve navigation of the bulletin and transparency. Specifically, charts do not clearly link to underlying data tables or associated StatsWales data, reducing accessibility and transparency.

Our judgement

Overall, the Labour Market Overview bulletin clearly communicates quality and uncertainty and provides useful information on the appropriate use of the different labour market data sources. The Welsh Government has already begun to make changes based on the emerging findings from this review and should continue to progress its plans for implementing the refreshed Code of Practice for Statistics.

We have identified two main areas where the Trustworthiness, Quality and Value of the Labour Market Overview can be strengthened in line with the Code:

- To improve the accessibility of the main bulletin and keep the supporting material relevant, the Welsh Government should refresh the supporting material in the bulletin, ensuring compliance with Code 3.0.
- To improve the accessibility of the bulletin and user understanding, the Welsh Government should clearly signpost to the underlying datasets under the graphs.

Next steps

We expect Welsh Government to provide a public update on progress against all recommendations by September 2026.

