

Article

Investment in intangible assets in the UK: 2018

Experimental estimates of investment in a broad set of intangible assets, in current and constant prices.

Contact:
Melanie Lewis
nfa-development@ons.gov.uk
+44 (0)1633 456888

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Correction

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We have corrected an error in Table 5. The previous version presented total figures for the whole economy rather than the market sector only.

In addition, we have improved the deflators used for constant price estimates of Training, Total Tangible/Intangible Assets, and Total Capitalised/Uncapitalised Intangible Assets. As a result, the percentages in the first two Main Points have changed by 0.1 percentage points.

Notice

23 April 2024

The [latest data for investment in intangible assets](#) from 2021 onwards are now published as a statistical bulletin.

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1 . Main points

- Constant price investment in intangible assets in the UK grew by 3.2% to £169.2bn between 2017 and 2018.
- Total intangible investment was greater than tangible investment in 2018, which fell 3.9% to £151.0bn.
- In 2018, the intangible investment currently treated as capital in the National Accounts totalled £63.8bn, whilst uncapitalised intangible investment totalled £105.4bn.
- The largest capitalised asset was Software (£33.9bn), accounting for 20.0% of total intangible investment in 2018 and the largest uncapitalised asset was Training (£30.6bn), accounting for 18.1% of total intangible investment in 2018.
- The largest rises in investment between 2017 and 2018 were in Financial Product Innovation and Purchased Software, which saw constant price increases of 20.7% and 16.8% respectively, while Mineral Exploration was the only asset to see a decline in investment.
- In 2018, the industry with the highest intensity of intangible investment was Information and Communication, where intangible investment was equivalent to 21.1% of Gross Value Added (GVA).

2 . Investment in intangible assets in the UK data

[Investment in intangible assets in the UK](#)

Dataset | Released 7 April 2021

Experimental estimates of investment in a broad set of intangible assets from 1992 to 2018, in current and constant prices.

3 . Measuring the data

Updated estimates of investment in intangible assets are constructed using the methodology of previous estimates, save for the following amendments:

- Estimates of Purchased Design now include an estimate of the output of the Specialised Design industry (Standard Industrial Classification 2007 code 74.1)
- Estimates for Own-account Branding are now estimated using a sum of costs approach, equivalent to other own-account estimates, as detailed in Martin (2019)
- Improved cost uplifts have been introduced in Own-account Branding and Design, and Financial Product Innovation

These articles provide more detailed information on methodology:

[Developing experimental estimates of investment in intangible assets in the UK: 2016](#)

[Measuring the Other Half: New Measures of Intangible Investment from the ONS](#)

In addition, estimates in constant prices have been provided for the first time. Information on the data sources used to deflate the current price estimates can be found on the Notes page in the data download.

