Statistical bulletin

GDP, UK regions and countries: October to December 2018

Quarterly economic activity within the countries of the UK (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) and the nine English regions (North East, North West, Yorkshire and The Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands, East of England, London, South East, South West).

Contact:
Bethan West
bethan.west@ons.gov.uk
+44 (0)1633 456620

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Next release:
To be announced

Notice

31 July 2026

We will be introducing substantial methods and data changes to our existing quarterly regional gross domestic product (GDP) outputs. We will introduce the changes in our Update on reinstating quarterly regional GDP estimates for England and Wales article series. When we fully reinstate the output we will start a new series for statistical articles, datasets, and a quality and methodology guide.

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1 . Other pages in this release

- Regions of the UK
- Methodology used to produce these estimates
- GDP in the North East
- GDP in the North West
- GDP in Yorkshire and The Humber
- GDP in the East Midlands
- GDP in the West Midlands
- GDP in the East of England
- GDP in London
- GDP in the South East
- GDP in the South West
- GDP in Wales
- GDP in Scotland, published by the Scottish Government
- GDP in Northern Ireland, published by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

2 . Main points

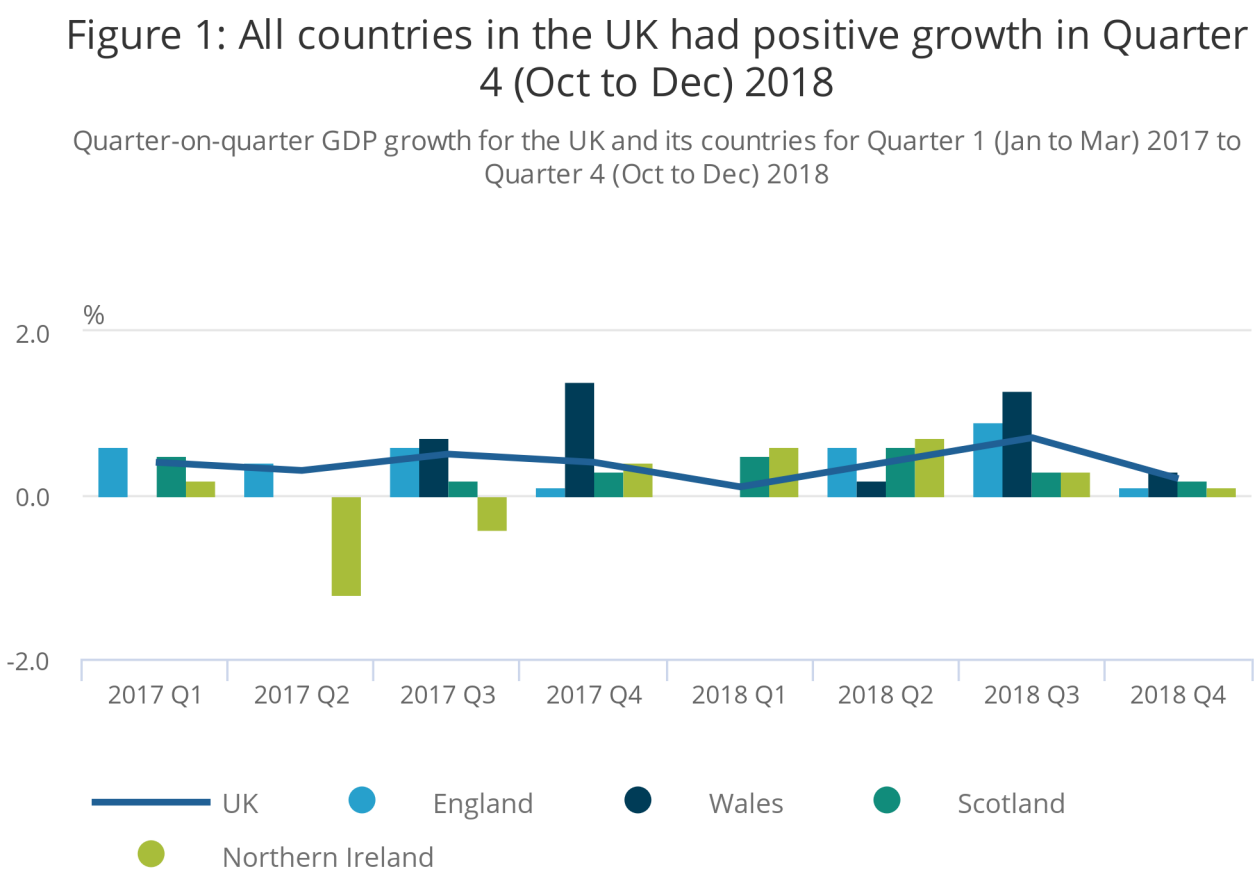
- Of the four countries of the UK, in Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2018, gross domestic product (GDP) growth was highest in Wales (0.3%) and lowest in England (0.1%) and Northern Ireland (0.1%).
- Of the nine English regions and Wales, the area with the highest GDP growth was the South East (0.8%), with the biggest fall in the North West (negative 0.7%).
- Estimates of quarterly GDP in the English regions and Wales are published here for the first time, alongside data previously published by the Scottish Government and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

These estimates are designated as Experimental Statistics and should be interpreted with some caution. Regional data can be volatile and quarterly movements should be considered alongside the long-term trend. To assist with this, quarter on same quarter a year ago data are published alongside the latest quarter-on-quarter estimates.

3 . Analysis of regional GDP growth

Figure 1: All countries in the UK had positive growth in Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2018

Quarter-on-quarter GDP growth for the UK and its countries for Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2017 to Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2018



Source: Office for National Statistics – Regional GDP estimate

Notes:

1. Q1 refers to Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar), Q2 refers to Quarter 2 (Apr to June), Q3 refers to Quarter 3 (July to Sept), Q4 refers to Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec).

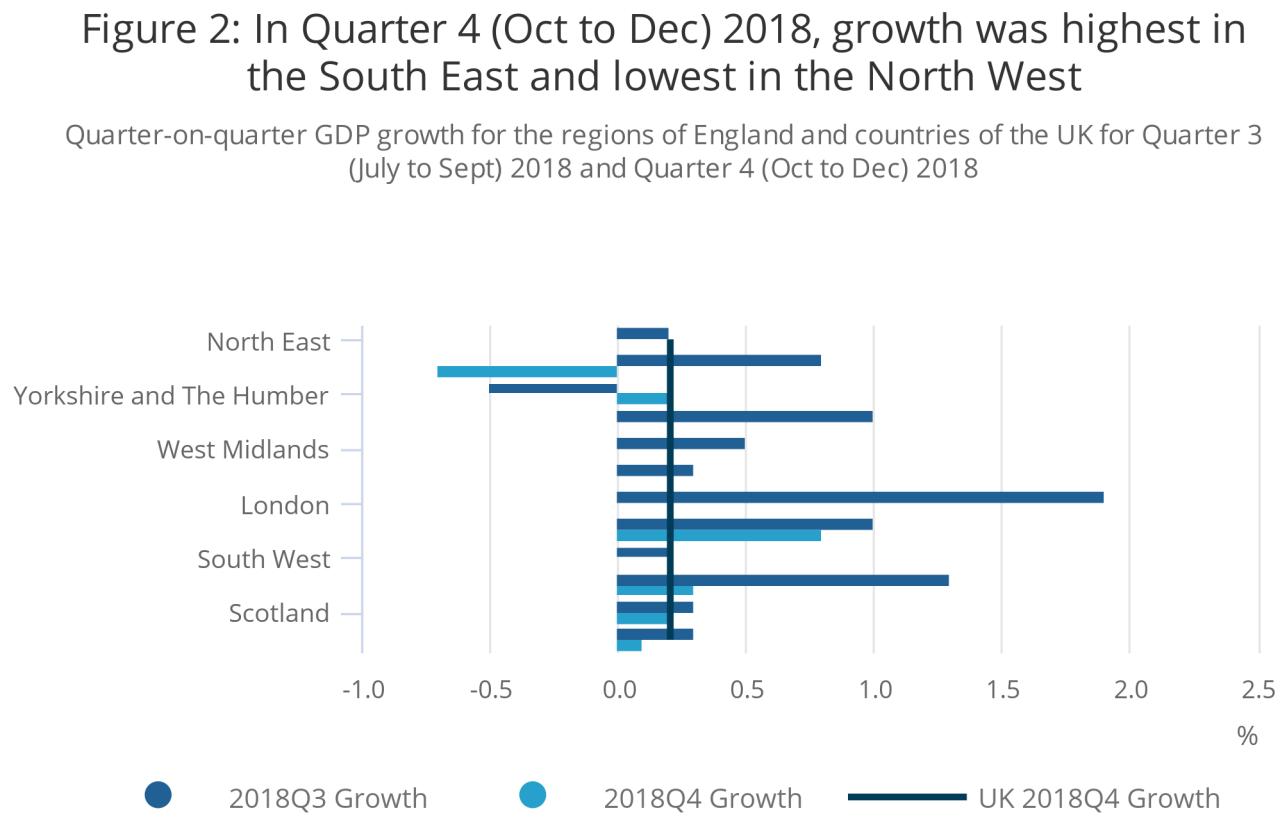
UK gross domestic product (GDP) growth was 0.2% in Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2018. This was a slowing in the UK growth rate following a relatively strong Quarter 3 (July to Sept).

All countries in the UK had positive quarter-on-quarter growth in Quarter 4 2018. Growth was highest in Wales (0.3%) and lowest in England (0.1%) and Northern Ireland (0.1%).

More information about the drivers for these changes can be found in the datasets that accompany this publication, and the data published by the Scottish Government and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

Figure 2: In Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2018, growth was highest in the South East and lowest in the North West

Quarter-on-quarter GDP growth for the regions of England and countries of the UK for Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018 and Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2018



Source: Office for National Statistics – Regional GDP estimate

Notes:

1. Q3 refers to Quarter 3 (July to Sept), Q4 refers to Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec).

Of the countries of the UK and the regions of England, only the North West had negative growth in Quarter 4 2018, falling by 0.7%. This followed positive growth in this region in Quarter 3 2018, at 0.8%. The South East had the highest growth in Quarter 4 2018 at 0.8%.

Only the South East and Wales had growth in Quarter 4 2018 higher than the UK (at 0.2%), at 0.8% and 0.3% respectively.

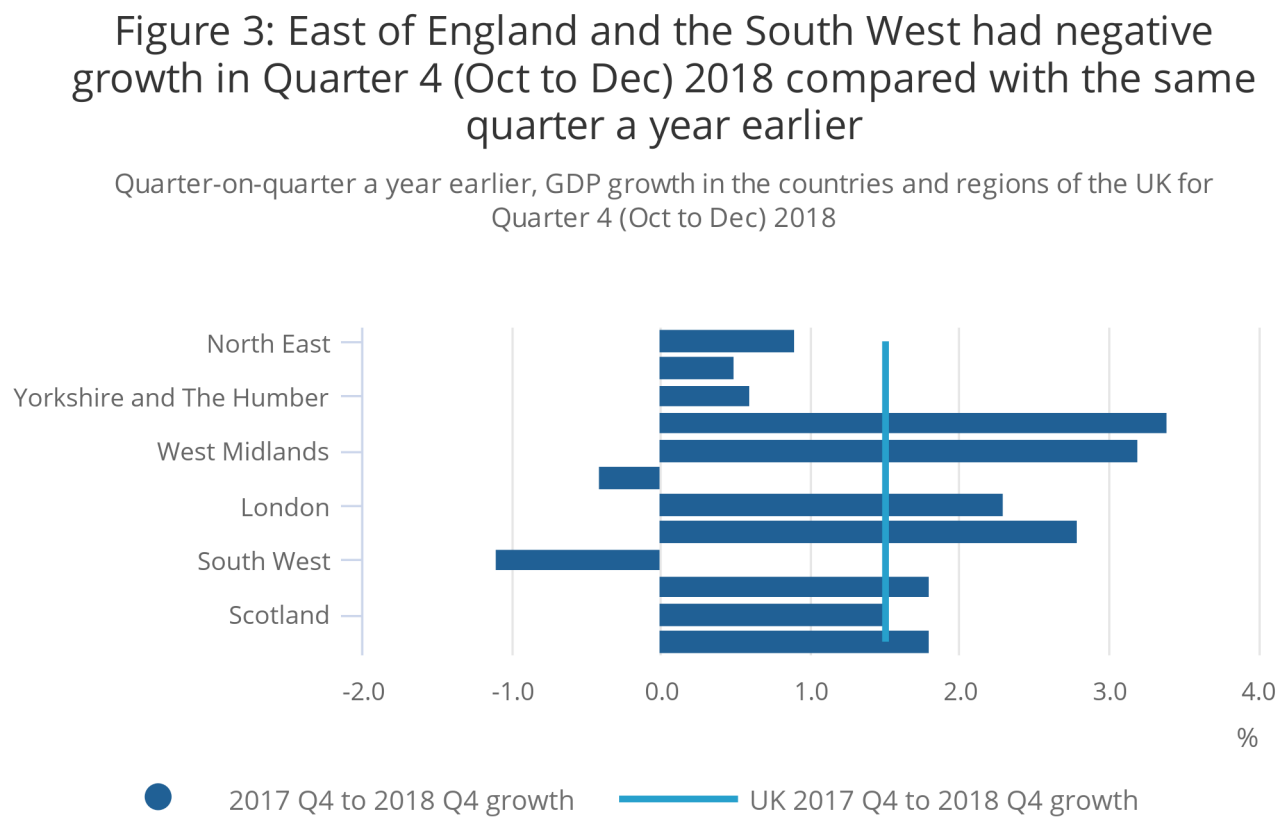
Table 1: Percentage growth in the countries and regions of the UK
Quarter 3 (July to Sept) 2018 and Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2018

Country/Region	Growth in 2018 Quarter 3 (July to Sept)	Growth in 2018 Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec)
North East	0.2%	0.0%
North West	0.8%	-0.7%
Yorkshire & The Humber	-0.5%	0.2%
East Midlands	1.0%	0.0%
West Midlands	0.5%	0.0%
East of England	0.3%	0.0%
London	1.9%	0.0%
South East	1.0%	0.8%
South West	0.2%	0.0%
Wales	1.3%	0.3%
Scotland	0.3%	0.2%
Northern Ireland	0.3%	0.1%

Source: Office for National Statistics – Regional GDP estimate

Figure 3: East of England and the South West had negative growth in Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2018 compared with the same quarter a year earlier

Quarter-on-quarter a year earlier, GDP growth in the countries and regions of the UK for Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2018



Source: Office for National Statistics – Regional GDP estimate

Notes:

1. Q4 refers to Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec).

Of the countries and regions of the UK, six had growth in Quarter 4 2018 that was above the UK level. These were: East Midlands (3.4%), West Midlands (3.2%), the South East (2.8%), London (2.3%), Northern Ireland (1.8%) and Wales (1.8%).

Only the East of England and the South West had negative growth in Quarter 4 2018, with negative growths of 0.4% and 1.1% respectively.

More information about the low-level industries for these changes can be found in the datasets for Wales and the regions of the UK, and the data published by the Scottish Government and NISRA.

Figure 4: GDP growth by main industrial sector for the English regions and Wales

Quarter 2 (Apr to June) 2017 to Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2018

Download the data

More detail about the growth in GDP in each region can be found in the relevant pages.

These estimates are calculated based on site-level activity, so industry movements may differ to those at the national level, which are based on overall business activity.

Agriculture will be shown here in future releases, but has been temporarily withdrawn for this release. Please see Section 6 for more information.

4 . Data

Quarterly country and regional GDP
Dataset | Released 5 September 2019
Quarterly economic activity within Wales and the nine English regions (North East, North West, Yorkshire and The Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands, East of England, London, South East, South West).

5 . Glossary

GDP

Gross domestic product (GDP) measures the value of goods and services produced in the UK. It estimates the size of, and growth in, the economy.

Production

Sections B to E.

Construction

Section F.

Services

Sections G to T.

6 . Measuring these data

The main data for these estimates are turnover data from approximately 1.9 million Value Added Tax (VAT) returns. Information from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) on workplace employment allows us to apportion the VAT turnover for each business based on their employment share within a region. There is also a quality assurance of administrative data (QAAD) report for VAT data.

Other volume measure data are used where appropriate, or where VAT data has insufficient coverage. A full list of other data sources is included in the methodology article.

Detailed methodology for these statistics is available.

A detailed analysis of these new data is planned for the Economic review to be published in October 2019.

7 . Strengths and limitations

These data are designated as Experimental Statistics. These are statistics that are in the testing phase and not yet fully developed. We will continue to develop these statistics and seek users' views on their use and needs for these data.

While the data sources and methods used in both our regional and national estimates of gross domestic product (GDP) are broadly similar, there are some clear differences. For example, in the extent to which Value Added Tax (VAT) data are used.

This means that while regional GDP aims to produce the best estimates at a regional level, the sum of the regions (adding in published estimates for Scotland and Northern Ireland) may not equal the national total. To address this, we have constrained our regional GDP estimates to the national totals in such a way that minimises changes to the region by industry quarter-on-quarter growth rates. The overall impact of this constraining on the regional estimates is small.

There are different possible methods available to us for carrying out this constraining. We continue to examine the impact of the range of different methods before deciding which one is best suited to these data in advance of applying to be assessed as National Statistics.

Please note that the one industry that is not fully constrained is mining and quarrying. In this industry there were challenges in chain linking the data from the regional accounts. We will address this in the regional accounts publication in December 2019 allowing subsequent quarterly releases to be fully constrained.

As part of the quality assurance process the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) notified us that they have improved their methodology for estimating regional breakdowns of the agricultural accounts. Defra has since provided us with data produced using the new methodology but unfortunately we were unable to process that data in time for this release. Data based on the old methodology is included in the compilation of headline GDP for the English regions and Wales, but will have little effect on these aggregates given the comparatively small size of the agriculture industry. However, we have taken the decision not to include a breakdown of agriculture in this release and we will process the new data and provide a breakdown in our Quarter 1 (Jan to Mar) 2019 release.

8 . More about regional and economic data

GDP monthly estimate, UK: June 2019
Bulletin | Released 9 August 2019
Gross domestic product (GDP) measures the value of goods and services produced in the UK.

Regional economic activity by gross value added (balanced), UK: 1998 to 2017
Bulletin | Released 12 December 2018
Annual estimates of economic activity by UK country, region and local area using balanced regional gross value added (GVA(B)).

9 . You may also be interested in

GDP in Scotland
Statistical publication | Released 7 August 2019
This publication includes the updated second estimate of onshore GDP growth in real terms, additional breakdowns of GDP in nominal (cash) terms, and key household sector statistics.

NI Composite Economic Index
Release | Published 18 July 2019
The NICEI is an experimental quarterly measure of the performance of the NI economy based on available official statistics.

Welsh short-term output indicators
Report | Published 18 July 2019
Data showing the short term movements in the output of industries in the production, construction and market services sectors.