

National Records of Scotland

Compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics

29 August 2023

1. Voluntary Statement of Compliance

This statement shows how the National Records of Scotland (NRS) have followed the principles of the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) in the production and release of the [Administrative Data Based Population Estimate using Version 3 methodology, Scotland 2016-2018](#) as statistical research.

NRS is committed to adhering to the highest standards of analysis. While NRS does produce a range of Official Statistics, the findings in the Administrative Data Based Population Estimates using Version 2 methodology, Scotland 2016-2018 are not considered Official Statistics. The methodology has changed since the previous publication of Administrative Data Based Population Estimates (ABPE). Because of this, we feel it is too early for these statistics to meet the requirements for Official Statistics (including experimental statistics).

One of the main reasons for publishing these statistics as statistical research is to support discussions with data suppliers and stakeholders on the application of this work. We have engaged with stakeholders on the ABPEs, and included their feedback in our development of the ABPE methodology. We will continue to work with stakeholders to gain their feedback on outputs produced and methodology developments for administrative data based population estimates and to inform future developments.

Although not Official Statistics, this work has voluntarily adopted the principles of the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) and complies as much as possible, which is why we have applied to be [Voluntary Adopters](#) of the Code of Practice for this release.

The Code of Practice for Statistics has three pillars:

- Trustworthiness
- Quality
- and Value

NRS also publish the National Statistics on Mid-Year Population Estimates. This is the publication that users should refer to when they require population figures for Scotland.

2. Trustworthiness – trusted people, systems and processes

NRS is a Non-Ministerial Department of the Scottish Government and as such is accountable to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture and ultimately to the Scottish Parliament.

NRS has recruited professional statisticians who are part of the Scottish Government Statistician Professional Group and the Government Statistical Service (GSS). As part of the GSS individuals undertake a commitment to maintain professional standards and participate in continuous professional development.

They have a professional line of accountability to the Head of Profession for Statistics in NRS and to the Chief Statistician for the Scottish Government who has a professional line of accountability to the National Statistician.

There have been improvements on the methodology since the previous publication of the ABPE in December 2021. The revisions to the ABPEs are specified in our publication. In accordance with NRS's revision policy and the code of practice, we have revised the 2016–2018 data using version 3 of the methodology.

A DPIA has been published on the NRS website since 2019, to allow data users to see progress for this project. The DPIA covers how we have de-identified the data and used a third-party trusted model to process the data, as per data management best practice. It also includes information on our stakeholder engagement for the project over the period. The DPIA is reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure that it accurately captures the relevant information and has been updated for the publication in August 2023.

NRS has, and will continue to, pre-announce the dates of forthcoming statistical research papers on administrative data based population estimates. This report was

pre-announced 4 weeks prior to publication on the [NRS](#) and [Scottish Government's](#) Forthcoming Publication calendar.

3. Quality - Robust data, methods and processes

The administrative data that is used in this publication undergoes rigorous checks at source from the data providers. Once the data has been received by NRS the data sources are assessed by statisticians for their accuracy, reliability, quality and suitability for use in this project. A summary Quality Assurance of Administrative Datasets (QAAD) of each dataset has been published after checking the content with the data provider for accuracy. As part of the QAAD report, the team has reviewed the quality of the outputs in relation to their analysis.

We have consulted the Demography Team in NRS who produce the National Statistics for mid-year population estimates in Scotland as part of the quality assurance process. The Demography Team are the topic experts on population estimates within NRS.

NRS has had discussions with stakeholders on the strengths and limitations of the data used and the underpinning methodology. NRS will continue to have these discussions based on the updated population estimates. This will help to continue to identify areas for improvement in the methodology and additional datasets that could improve the quality of the outputs.

4. Value – efficiency, proportionality and accessibility

The efficiency and proportionality of these population estimates lies in that no bespoke data collection is required, instead using existing data sources to produce population estimates with an innovative methodology.

The value of this statistical research publication is to contribute to the body of work that is used to make recommendations for future censuses and demographic

statistics. NRS work with other national statistical agencies to support our respective programmes on greater use of administrative data within demographic statistics.

All information relating to this publication is accessible on the NRS website. Given the nature of these statistics and the methodology used to create them, a two-tiered approach has been adopted to disseminate this information. The main publication contains a high-level summary of the methodology, along with detail on the differences between version 2 and version 3. Further detail on the methodology is included in the methodology reports of the previous publications.

There were a number of stakeholder events during 2021 to present the population estimates and methodology. NRS also presented on these at conferences in 2022. We have engaged with users from a range of backgrounds to understand their needs, for example academics, statisticians and analysts, local authority representatives and main demographic users. As this research is published on the NRS website any user can contact us for information.

As a result of stakeholder discussions NRS are continuing to expand our analysis. We are currently looking at publishing household estimates, and hope to start looking at migration within Scotland.

NRS are currently exploring other datasets to support this analysis as identified by users. We will continue to meet with data users to discuss the research and identify other improvements that will help to meet their needs.

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