

REPORT OF A BREACH OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR STATISTICS



1. Core Information

Title of statistical output and link	Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), UK: February 2020
Name of producer organisation	Office for National Statistics (ONS)
Division and Branch	Labour Market and Households Division, Labour Supply Branch
Responsible Divisional Director (DD)	David Freeman
Name and contact details of person reporting the breach	Name: David Bovill Email: david.bovill@ons.gov.uk Telephone: Ext. 1535
Departmental Statistics Head of Profession	Debra Prestwood
Link to published statement about the breach (if relevant)	
Date of breach report	9 March 2020

2. Circumstances of breach [\[guidance\]](#)

Relevant principle(s) and practice(s)	Trustworthiness: Orderly Release (Principle T3, Practices T3.6)
Date of occurrence of breach	26 February 2020
<p>Normally, following the publication of our quarterly (not market sensitive) 'Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)' release at 9:30am, we publish an adhoc release on the website which breaks down the estimates a little further by age band:</p> <p>https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/adhocs/11341peopleaged16to17years18to20yearsand21to24yearsnotineducationemploymentortrainingneetukoctobertodecember2019</p> <p>This adhoc is produced for the Low Pay Commission (LPC) and we send them an email with the link after it's published. The NEET release is not a first release of Labour Force Survey(LFS) data, as further explained in section 3.</p> <p>However, for our February release, the adhoc was mistakenly published on the afternoon of 26 February, ahead of the NEET release on 27 February. This was because the member of staff who raised the adhoc publishing request with ONS Publishing Support Team was not aware that it should be stated in the request that the adhoc was not to be published until after 9:30am the following day.</p> <p>By the time the breach was spotted it was too late to remove the adhoc publication from the website before the main release was published.</p>	

3. Impact of the breach

<p>It should be noted that the latest LFS microdata (October to December 2019) that were used to produce the NEET release (and the adhoc) were sent to other government users at the time of the main labour market release on 18 February and have also been publicly available (via the UK Data Service) since then. This means that it would have been possible for microdata users to produce these statistics themselves ahead of the NEET release. In other words, the NEET release is not a first release of LFS data.</p>

As far as we are aware there were 5 views of the adhoc before the official NEET release on 27 February. We discovered the breach ourselves and it was not reported to us by any external party. LPC were not sent a link to the adhoc until after 9:30am on 27 February and the likelihood of anyone else seeing the adhoc by chance are small.

In addition, the adhoc did not actually contain any headline NEET estimates as all the figures in the adhoc are not seasonally adjusted, whereas our headline NEET estimates are seasonally adjusted.

4. Corrective actions (taken or planned) to prevent re-occurrence

To avoid this happening again in future we will ensure that we do not raise the adhoc publishing request until after 9:30am on the day of the main NEET release.

In the longer term we are planning to add the data provided in the adhoc to the dataset that accompanies our NEET release, removing the need to publish a separate adhoc for LPC.