

# Northern Ireland Quarterly Retail Sales Index Revision Policy

Theme: Economy

## Revisions Policy

This revisions policy, which describes how both planned and unplanned revisions will be published in the quarterly [Northern Ireland Retail Sales Index \(RSI\)](#) statistical bulletins, has been developed to comply with the [National Statistics revisions protocol](#).

## Background

In an attempt to reduce the burden on those who complete statistical returns, the majority of [Economic and Labour Market Statistics \(ELMS\) section](#) statistics are estimates of what they are measuring rather than being complete counts. Reliance on surveys to collect information to produce statistical outputs means that socio-economic trends cannot be measured in their entirety. They are nevertheless based on partial data which is adjusted to take account of biases which arise in surveying, and other available information, such as the emergence of new seasonal patterns.

Over time, as more information becomes available, estimates can be revised to improve quality and accuracy which will provide a more accurate picture of what is being measured. Users require good quality data that are timely and can be accessed as close to the event which the data measures as possible. A policy of accepting revisions enables statisticians to provide users with data close to the event but also allowing the improvement of that data as other information becomes available. Revisions are a standard practice when producing official statistics.

## Scope

This policy describes how both planned and unplanned revisions will be published and covers each release of the RSI.

## Communications

It is vital that we communicate effectively with our users when dealing with revisions to our data. We must ensure that users are aware of the pattern of regular revisions to our data, their usual time-span and likely magnitude. Users should also be confident we will introduce unplanned revisions in a structured and transparent way. The RSI statistical bulletins contain details of all significant revisions in that particular release, both planned and unplanned.

## The cycle of planned revisions

The following table describes the quarters in which the RSI is normally revised, the usual period of revisions, and the reasons why the data need to be revised. If in the course of these regular revisions it is necessary to revise data for a longer time period, this information will be included in the accompanying notes.

Quarter	Change	Detail
Quarterly	Revision	A revisable period of the preceding four quarters is applied to late responses for RSI census businesses. Inclusion of this revised, more accurate data helps to improve the estimates of growth for each quarter but also adds volatility to quarterly and annual changes.
Quarter 1 2022	Seasonal Adjustment Review	Following the seasonal adjustment review conducted in May 2022, changes will be made to some regressors and models used to seasonally adjust (where applicable) time series using X13 ARIMA SEATS.
Quarter 1 2022	2020 GVA	Figures in this publication to be weighted using 2020 GVA when available in May 2022.
Quarter 3 2022	NI Index Rebased to 2020	Figures rebased to 2020 = 100 in line with ONS.

## Unplanned revisions

From time to time revisions may need to be made outside of this timetable. Examples of such revisions include improvements to methodology, revisions to data that feed into IOS data sets and the discovery of incorrect data through our quality assurance procedures.

If revisions arising through improvements to methodology or changes to administrative data are found to be insignificant, they will be introduced in the next planned set of revisions according to the timetable above. However, if these revisions are thought to affect economic analysis or are sufficiently large, they will be

introduced more quickly. All such revisions will be pre-announced at least one month in advance of their releases.

If incorrect data are discovered after publication, these too will be examined for their impact. Where the changes are significant, a corrigendum will be issued as soon as is practicable, whilst minor corrections will be included in the next planned release. In all cases a full explanation will be included in the release.