

User needs from producer price inflation statistics

Office for National Statistics
20 March 2024



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# General information

#### Why we are engaging

We are looking to better understand user needs for producer price inflation statistics, and to refine and rationalise our published outputs.

To clarify user needs for our future publications, we are seeking feedback from users, particularly on the following questions:

* How and why you use our current data, and is this based on the manufacturing or services elements of producer price inflation?
* Do you understand the proposed new datasets and how they can be used to replicate the data currently provided?
* Are there additional datasets that you would like and why?
* Are there any items or datasets which you no longer find useful?

#### Engagement details

**Issued:** 20 March 2024

**Respond by:** 22 May 2024

#### Enquiries to: business.prices@ons.gov.uk

# How to respond

We welcome contributions from all users of producer price inflation statistics. This includes, but is not limited to:

* government and government agencies
* research groups
* policy think tanks
* academia
* business and industry

You can respond by completing the online questionnaire on our [consultation and engagement platform](https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/external-affairs/2022-based-population-projections/).

You can also respond by email to business.prices@ons.gov.uk or by post, using the downloadable version of this questionnaire.

Postal address:

Producer price inflation statistics user engagement

Prices Division

Room 4200

Office for National Statistics

Segensworth Road

Titchfield

Fareham

Hampshire

PO15 5RR

When responding, please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. Your response will be most useful if it is framed in direct response to the questions posed, though further comments and evidence are also welcome.

#### Accessibility

If you prefer a different format, or you would like to discuss your feedback, please email business.prices@ons.gov.uk.

# Confidentiality and data protection

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) needs your name and email address to receive your response. We may contact you about your response to this engagement questionnaire.

Within 12 weeks of the user engagement questionnaire closing, we will aim to provide respondents with a link to a summary of anonymised responses and a response to the findings on consultations.ons.gov.uk.

Please be aware that, as a public authority, we are subject to the [Freedom of Information Act](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents) and can never completely guarantee that names and responses will not be published.  We will not publish personal contact details, such as email addresses. To find out more, read our [Privacy Policy](https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/privacy_policy/).

#### Quality assurance

If you have any complaints about the way this engagement has been conducted, please email external.affairs@ons.gov.uk.

# Overview

The ONS produces a range of statistics for both consumer and producer price inflation. The Producer Price Index (PPI) statistics include Input (“inputs into manufacturing”), Output (“outputs from manufacturing”) and Services inflation estimates. Our Input PPI inflation estimate comprises domestic and Import Producer Price Indices (PPI and IPI, respectively), with the latter covering imports into manufacturers only. The Output PPI measure comprises domestic and Export Producer Price Indices (PPI and EPI, respectively), with the latter covering exports from manufacturers only. The Services PPI inflation estimate covers the price of services provided to UK-based customers for a selection of service industries. These individual price indices are also aggregated together to create a services industry measure (headline SPPI) with limited coverage. It does not yet provide full coverage of the UK services sector.

The Business Prices team in the ONS is reviewing its publications for PPI statistics, with the aim of refining and rationalising our outputs to better meet the needs of users. This will also help with our quality assurance processes by reducing the number of data items that are repeated across multiple outputs.

The current list of standard outputs includes a [statistical bulletin](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/producerpriceinflation/january2024) and multiple [datasets](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/producerpriceinflation/january2024/relateddata):

* Statistical bulletin:
	+ PPI (monthly)
	+ SPPI (quarterly, combined with PPI)
* Datasets (monthly):
	+ Producer price inflation dataset (MM22)
		- Two versions: Reference Tables, Time series
	+ Producer price inflation time series
	+ Producer price inflation: monthly figures
	+ Growth rates of output and input producer price inflation (PPI)
	+ Output and input producer price inflation: contributions to the annual rates
	+ Producer price inflation records: monthly figures
	+ Producer price inflation revision triangle
		- Four versions: Input 1, 12 months; Output 1, 12 months
* Datasets (quarterly):
	+ Services producer price inflation
	+ Services producer price inflation time series
	+ Services producer price inflation (SPPI) records
	+ Services producer price inflation (SPPI) revisions triangle
* Time series data:
	+ approximately 2,000 data series for PPI (monthly)
	+ approximately 140 data series for SPPI (quarterly)

These outputs are described in more detail in the ‘Current publications’ section.

## Why we are seeking your views

We are looking to understand how our outputs work for all types of users of our statistics, specifically with on the following two questions:

1. How are our outputs used by you, your team or your organisation?
* Rationale: We are keen to understand your use of our outputs to ensure that our statistics meet users needs, but equally, we want to ensure that all outputs are used and minimise the production and publication of those which are rarely used.
1. What improvements could be made to our standard outputs to better meet your needs, for example to formatting, content or publication frequency?
* Rationale: Our outputs have been developed over several years, but we understand that how people use them have also developed dramatically. For instance, many of our current outputs are designed to be read by people or printed. However, we suspect that many users will be using our outputs as an input into their own processes and hence outputs which are more readily suitable for those purposes – for example, by minimising text formatting – may be preferable.

Your feedback will enable to us to better meet your needs. Having gathered this feedback, we may:

* merge statistical products where there are multiple publications on the same or similar topics
* reduce the frequency of products
* change the scope and volume of statistical products where there are multiple metrics and breakdowns that are duplicates or rarely used
* introduce new statistical products where there is a new or emerging need
* pause or stop statistical products where the statistics may no longer be relevant or appear to be rarely used

## Event

We are holding an online event on 15 April 2024 at 3:00pm. This is an opportunity to further discuss the questions in this user engagement, our plans for future publications and for you to ask any questions you may have. You can register to attend on [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/producer-prices-inflation-understanding-user-needs-tickets-865593181507).

Your contribution is very much welcomed. Thank you for taking part.

# Publications within this user engagement

Before asking for your output needs from our publications, this section outlines what each current release provides and the areas of change on which we are seeking feedback.

## Current publications

In a regular monthly release, covering Input and Output PPI, we publish 12 outputs: a statistical bulletin and 11 datasets. On a quarterly basis, these releases are expanded by an additional four datasets to include Services PPI, with the commentary in the statistical bulletin expanded to include this set of statistics. In addition, the underlying indices are published as time series outputs.

### Statistical bulletin

The current monthly PPI statistical bulletin includes the following sections:

1. Main points
	1. A summary of the headline measures of inflation, both annual and monthly, along with some very brief commentary of the current trends
2. Producer price inflation rates
	1. Commentary on the current headline measures (annual inflation), typically focussing on the direction (inflation or deflation) of those measures and the duration of the current trend.
3. Input producer price inflation
	1. A slightly more in-depth commentary on the Input PPI measure and the 10 groupings that are aggregated to produce it. It typically focusses on the key price groupings (indices) that are currently having the greatest impact upon the headline Input PPI measure. It also includes a short description of the measures covering imported materials and fuels (IPI).
4. Output producer price inflation
	1. As for Section 3 but covering Output PPI.
5. Producer price inflation data
	1. Hyperlinks to a subset of the underlying datasets.
6. Glossary
7. Measuring the data
	1. A short description of some of the key principles underlying the production of the PPI statistics.
8. Strengths and limitations
	1. Includes a summary of the current response rates for each of the underlying surveys (PPI, IPI, EPI).
9. Related links
	1. Links to other inflation and economic measures, such as Consumer Price Inflation (CPI).

On a quarterly basis, this bulletin is expanded to include the SPPI measures. During these months, Section 5 covers ‘Services producer price inflation’ and has similar content to Sections 3 and 4. The sections numbered 5 to 9 in the list above are shifted to become Sections 6 to 10.

### Input and Output PPI datasets

The following section outlines the content of each of the datasets that is published on a monthly basis for Input and Output PPI.

Dataset 1 - Growth rates of output and input producer price inflation (PPI)

* Data types: Growth rates (annual, monthly)
* Index coverage: Input and Output PPI, headline and groupings levels[[1]](#footnote-2)
* Timeframe: Data goes back to 1996

Dataset 2 - Producer price inflation (MM22)

* Data types: Index values (monthly) with provisional and revision markers
* Index coverage: Input and Output PPI, down to 4 digit level (where these are publishableaccording to the [ONS statistical disclosure control policy](https://www.ons.gov.uk/aboutus/transparencyandgovernance/datastrategy/datapolicies/statisticaldisclosurecontrol))
* Timeframe: Data covers the most recent 8 months

Dataset 3 - Producer price inflation records monthly figures

* Data types: Growth rates (annual, monthly), identification of periods when these rates were equal, most recently higher, and most recently lower
* Index coverage: Input and Output PPI, headline and groupings levels
* Timeframe: Data covers the most recent month

Dataset 4 - Producer price inflation revision triangle total input one month (GHIP)

Dataset 5 - Producer price inflation revision triangle total input 12 months (GHIP)

* Data types: Growth rates (annual, monthly), revisions (difference in growth rate from previously published value)
* Index coverage: Input PPI, headline level
* Timeframe: Data goes back to 2009

Dataset 6 - Producer price inflation revision triangle total output one month (GB7S)

Dataset 7 - Producer price inflation revision triangle total output 12 months (GB7S)

* Data types: Growth rates (annual, monthly), revisions (difference in growth rate from previously published value)
* Index coverage: Output PPI, headline level
* Timeframe: Data goes back to 2009

Dataset 8 - Producer price inflation monthly figures

* Data types: Index values (monthly) with provisional and revision markers, growth rates (annual, monthly) for the most recent 1 or 2 months only, revisions (difference in index value and growth rate from previously published value – Output PPI and only for the most recent 1 or 2 months)
* Index coverage: Input and Output PPI, down to 4 digit level for some indices
* Timeframe: Data covers the most recent 5 to 12 months, with the duration being dependent upon the data type and index

Dataset 9 - Output and input producer price inflation contributions to the annual rates

* Data types: Contributions to growth rates (annual)
* Index coverage: Input and Output PPI, headline and groupings levels
* Timeframe: Data goes back to 2015

Dataset MM22 - Producer price inflation time series (MM22)

* Data types: Index value (monthly, annual average, quarterly average)
* Index coverage: Input and Output PPI, down to 4 digit level (where these are publishable)
* Timeframe: Data goes back to 1957 (not all indices)

Dataset PPI - Producer price inflation time series

* Data types: Index value (monthly, annual average, quarterly average)
* Index coverage: Input and Output PPI, down to 4 digit level (where these are publishable)
* Timeframe: Data goes back to 1957 (not all indices)

Note: Datasets MM22 and PPI typically cover different sets of indices (approximately 600 for MM22, which covers those indices reported in Dataset 2, and 1,500 for PPI, with approximately 90 in common, usually at the higher levels of aggregation).

### Services PPI datasets

The following section outlines the content of each of the datasets that is published on a quarterly basis for Services PPI.

Dataset 10 - Services producer price inflation (SPPI) records

* Data types: Growth rates (annual, quarterly), identification of periods when these rates were equal, most recently higher, most recently lower
* Index coverage: SPPI, headline and groupings levels
* Timeframe: Data covers the most recent month

Dataset 11 - Services producer price inflation (SPPI) revisions triangle

* Data types: Growth rates (annual, quarterly), revisions (difference in growth rate from previously published value)
* Index coverage: SPPI, headline level
* Timeframe: Data goes back to 2009

Dataset 12 - Services producer price inflation

* Data types: Index values (quarterly, annual average) with provisional and revision markers, growth rates (annual, quarterly), revisions (difference in index value and growth rate from previously published value)
* Index coverage: SPPI, down to 4 digit level (where these are publishable)
* Timeframe: Data covers the most recent 15 quarters

Dataset SPPI - Services producer price inflation time series

* Data types: Index value (quarterly, annual average)
* Index coverage: SPPI, down to 4 digit level (where these are publishable)
* Timeframe: Data goes back to 1996 (not all indices)

Supplementing the regularly published statistical bulletins and datasets, additional information on the quality and methods used in the production of those outputs is published for both Input and Output PPI, and Services PPI, including:

* [PPI Quality and Methodology Information (QMI)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/methodologies/producerpriceindicesqmi)
* [SPPI Quality and Methodology Information (QMI)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/methodologies/servicesproducerpriceinflationqmi)

## Proposed future publications

We are looking to refine and rationalise our outputs to better meet the needs of users. This section covers the main changes we are currently considering and which we would like your comments. We would also welcome suggestions for improvements to the scope and coverage of our data as part of longer-term development plans, as detailed in our [current development plan](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/articles/producerpricesdevelopmentplans/october2023).

### Statistical bulletin

We are expecting to maintain the current structure of the statistical bulletin with some minor changes to the content of some of the earlier sections.

1. Main points
	1. Some minor changes to focus on the key points, for example to be more ‘bullet point’ in style.
2. Producer Price Inflation Rates
	1. Expand the commentary to include both the annual and monthly measures of inflation for both Input and Output PPI, as well as including narrative on the main trends in these for the previous year.
3. Input Producer Price Inflation
	1. A greater focus on the 10 groupings that are aggregated to produce Input PPI. We would expect that this would include comment on the reasons why we are seeing changes in the underlying prices, where this is non-disclosive, as well as taking a longer-term view, such as focusing on the past 6 to 12 months as opposed to just the previous month.
4. Output Producer Price Inflation
	1. As for Section 3 but covering Output PPI.
5. Services Producer Price Inflation (on a quarterly basis)
	1. As for Section 3 but covering Services PPI.

We would expect Sections 5 to 9 (Sections 6 to 10 in those months when SPPI is also reported) to be largely unchanged.

### Datasets

We propose that the publications for both Input and Output PPI and Services PPI are rationalised to include 4 distinct datasets covering index values and growth rates, weights and contributions, recent records, and revisions. At present, it is to be determined whether the indices for both Input and Output PPI and Services PPI will be included in each dataset, or whether there will be 2 variants – one for Input and Output PPI, and one for Services PPI.

**Dataset A**

* Data types: Index value (monthly or quarterly) with provisional and revision markers, growth rates (annual, monthly or quarterly) with provisional and revision markers
* Index coverage: Input and Output PPI or SPPI, down to 4 digit level (where these are publishable)
* Timeframe: TBC (expected to be in line with current Datasets [MM22, PPI, SPPI])
* Expected data fields:
	+ Publication period
		- for this dataset, this should be the same value, such as the current publication month and year
	+ Data period
	+ Index identifier - potentially multiple identifiers, such as:
		- ONS Central Database Identifier (CDID)
		- Eurostat Classification of Products by Activity (CPA)
		- Description
	+ Data type identifier (one of: index value – monthly or quarterly, growth rate – annual, growth rate – monthly or quarterly)
	+ Data value
	+ Provisional marker
	+ Revision marker

**Dataset B**

* Data types: Weights, contributions to growth rates (annual, monthly or quarterly) with provisional and revision markers
* Index coverage: Input and Output PPI or SPPI, down to 4 digit level (where these are publishable)
* Timeframe: TBC (expected to be in line with current Dataset 9 [2015])
* Expected data fields:
	+ Publication period
		- for this dataset, this should be the same value, such as the current publication month and year
	+ Data period
	+ Index identifier for parent index (potentially multiple, such as CDID, CPA, or description)
	+ Index identifier for child index (potentially multiple, such as CDID, CPA, or description)
	+ Data type identifier (one of: weight, contribution to growth rate – annual, contributions to growth rate – monthly or quarterly)
	+ Data value
	+ Provisional marker
	+ Revision marker

**Dataset C**

* Data types: Growth rates (annual, monthly or quarterly), identification of periods when these rates were equal, most recently higher, most recently lower
* Index coverage: Input and Output PPI or SPPI, headline and groupings levels
* Timeframe: Data to cover the most recent month
* Expected data fields:
	+ Publication period
		- for this dataset, this should be the same value, such as the current publication month and year
	+ Data period
	+ Index identifier (potentially multiple, such as CDID, CPA, or description)
	+ Data type identifier (one of: growth rate – annual, growth rate – monthly or quarterly)
	+ Data value
	+ Period most recently higher
	+ Period most recently lower
	+ Periods with equal growth rates
	+ Provisional marker
	+ Revision marker

**Dataset D**

* Data types: Growth rates (annual, monthly or quarterly), revisions (difference in growth rate from previously published value)
* Index coverage: Input and Output PPI or SPPI, headline and groupings levels
* Timeframe: TBC (expected to be in line with current Datasets 4, 5, 6, 7, 11 [2009])
* Expected data fields:
	+ Publication period
	+ Original publication period
	+ Data period
	+ Index identifier (potentially multiple, such as CDID, CPA, or description)
	+ Data type identifier (one of: growth rate – annual, growth rate – monthly or quarterly)
	+ Revised data value
	+ Revision value
		- Difference between original data value and revised data value

To ease further processing of the data produced, it is expected that the new datasets will be produced in long data format. In long data format, each row is one time point per index. For example, the monthly index value for the Input PPI headline index (GHIP) for December 2023 would be a single row of data. So each index will have data in multiple rows and any variables that don’t change across time will have the same value in all the rows. In addition, these datasets will be produced with no or minimal additional formatting (for example, font style or cell colouring).

Table 1 summarises how the data currently published in Datasets 1 to 12, MM22, PPI, and SPPI with be transitioned to the new dataset structure. The symbols (x, -) have the following meaning:

* ‘x’ – (one of) the principal data items for the related dataset
* ‘-’ – this data item is recorded in one of the current datasets but is not the principal focus of that dataset



Table 1:Overlap between current and proposed future datasets

When developing the proposed new datasets, we were looking to address a number of issues or factors. We would appreciate your views on these, as well as on the datasets themselves and the level of detail to which individual indices should be published (for example, at the 2 or 3 digit level). The issues and factors we considered were:

* minimise the overlap between datasets
* maintain a consistent structure across all datasets to ease understanding and data linking, which should include the use of consistent structure across both classes of PPI (Input and Output PPI, SPPI)
* maintain a consistent data structure at different levels of index aggregation (for example, PPI growth rates are currently only published at the headline or grouping level whereas the new structure would allow publishing to [for example] the 3 digit level, subject to disclosure)
* separate the provisional and revision markers from the data values
* allow for potential future expansion of the datasets
* sinimise the requirement for data formatting (for example, keeping to the simplest format possible to allow output in open data formats [such as csv]) in order to address potential inclusion or accessibility concerns

# Questions

## Your name, email and organisation

We are asking for your name and email address, as we may contact you in relation to your response.

We treat the data we hold with respect, keeping it secure and confidential. To find out more, read our [Privacy Policy](https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/privacy_policy/).

**1. What is your name?**

(Required)

Click or tap here to enter text.

**2. What is your email address?**

You will automatically receive an acknowledgement email when you submit your response.

(Required)

Click or tap here to enter text.

**3. Are you responding to this survey in a personal or a professional capacity?**

(Required)

 ☐ Personal [IF ‘Personal’ THEN ROUTE TO Q6]

 ☐ Professional [IF ‘Professional’ THEN ROUTE TO Q4]

**4. Are you answering this survey on behalf of an organisation or a group?**

(Required)

 ☐ No, I am responding as an individual

 ☐ Yes, I am responding on behalf of an organisation

 ☐ Yes, I am responding on behalf of an informal group, such as a community or social media group

If you selected “Yes”, please provide the name of the organisation or group.

Click or tap here to enter text.

**5. If you are responding in a professional capacity, what sector do you work in?**

(Required)

 ☐ Academia and research or think tank

 ☐ Business and industry

 ☐ Government, including devolved administrations, local government and public bodies

 ☐ Charity or voluntary sector

 ☐ Other

If you selected “Other”, please state the sector that you work in.

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Your use of our statistics

##

**6. In our current releases we publish a range of datasets and a statistical bulletin. Could you let us know how, and why, these outputs are used by you, your team or your organisation?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**7. Is there anything in addition to these datasets and the bulletin that you would like to see included in our future releases?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**8.** **Are there any items or datasets that you no longer find useful?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**9. Do you have any feedback on the data and methods we use to develop the statistics for this release?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**10. Please provide comments on the articles we publish on methods and quality as part of the release (such as PPI QMI and SPPI QMI).**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**11. In our future statistical bulletins, is there any new content you would like to see presented alongside our commentary, and why?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**12. Are there new datasets you require from our regular releases?**

☐ Yes [IF YES THEN ROUTE TO Q13]

☐ No [IF NO THEN ROUTE TO Q14]

**13. What new datasets do you require from our regular releases and how do you plan to use these?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**14. Are there new data formats, in addition to csv and Excel, you require from our regular releases?**

☐ Yes [IF YES THEN ROUTE TO Q15]

☐ No [IF NO THEN ROUTE TO Q16]

**15. What new data formats do you require from our regular releases, and why?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Other comments

**16. Do you have any other comments about producer price inflation and services producer price inflation statistics from the Office for National Statistics?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**17. Do you have any other comments about this user engagement?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**18. How did you, or the organisation or group that you are responding on behalf of, hear about this user engagement?**

Select all that apply

☐ ONS website

☐ ONS email

☐ Newsletter

☐ Event or webinar

☐ Social media

☐ Other

**If “Other”, please specify**

Click or tap here to enter text.



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1. The index levels are aligned with the Eurostat statistical classification of products by activity (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Statistical_classification_of_products_by_activity_(CPA)>), abbreviated as CPA, which allows the classification of products (goods as well as services). For the purposes of PPI and this user engagement, the index levels of detail are (starting with greatest aggregation):

Headline (Input PPI, Output PPI, SPPI)

Groupings (Note: Groupings typically covers combinations of 1 or more 2 digit indices but this can vary)

2 digit (Divisions)

3 digit (Groups)

4 digit (Classes)

6 digit (Subcategories) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)