

# Northern Ireland Quarterly Index of Production

## Quarter 3 (July - September) 2024

Theme: Economy

Frequency: Quarterly

Geographical Area: Northern Ireland

Date: 19 December 2024

### Introduction

The quarterly Index of Production (IOP) provides a timely indicator of growth in the output of the production industries in Northern Ireland (NI). Output estimates are calculated from the IOP aspect of the Quarterly Business Survey (QBS). The IOP has a sample size of approximately 1,200 covering all production businesses with 40 or more employees and a representative sample of smaller businesses. The latest quarterly estimates are compared to revised Quarter 2 2024 and Quarter 3 2023 estimates.

For the last three years the reference year and base year used to produce the NI outputs have remained at 2019 due to the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the economy. In line with guidance detailed in the [UK National Accounts, The Blue Book: 2024](#) (published on 31 October 2024) figures in this publication have been weighted using the latest available [Northern Ireland 2022 GVA](#), and the base year has moved to 2022.

### Key Points

- The NI IOP increased by 1.2% over the quarter (July - September) and increased by 0.8% over the year.
- The UK IOP decreased by 0.2% over the quarter and 1.9% over the year.
- When the most recent four quarters are compared to the previous four quarters, the NI production sector decreased by 2.0% while the UK production sector decreased by 1.3%.
- The NI IOP is 3.1% above the pre-Coronavirus pandemic level seen in Quarter 4 2019, while the UK IOP remains 9.6% below its Quarter 4 2019 level.
- Over the quarter, the increase in NI production output was driven by increases in three of the four main sectors - Manufacturing (1.6%), Water supply, sewerage and waste management (Inc. recycling) (3.8%) and Mining and quarrying (8.5%). This was partially offset by a decrease in Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply (2.2%).
- Over the year, the increase in NI production output was driven by increases in two of the four main sectors - Manufacturing (1.3%), and Mining and quarrying (2.1%). This was offset by decreases in Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply (3.6%), and Water supply, sewerage and waste management (Inc. recycling) (1.0%).

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## Accredited Official Statistics

**Accredited official statistics** are a sub-set of official statistics that have been independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation and confirmed as complying with the standards of trustworthiness, quality, and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). Accredited official statistics are called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007.

These accredited official statistics, the quarterly Index of Production (IOP), were **independently reviewed** by the Office for Statistics Regulation in August 2011. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics and should be labelled 'accredited official statistics'.

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to. You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing [regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk) or via the OSR.

Since the assessment by the UK Statistics Authority, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics and have made the following improvements:

- Removed pre-release access to enhance trustworthiness and also brought the publication date forward as a result;
- Reduced business burden by offering the option of online data returns.
- Improved accessibility of Index of Production Statistics by amending the format and structure of reports in line with accessibility regulations.
- **Consulted users** on streamlining the IOP statistical bulletin.

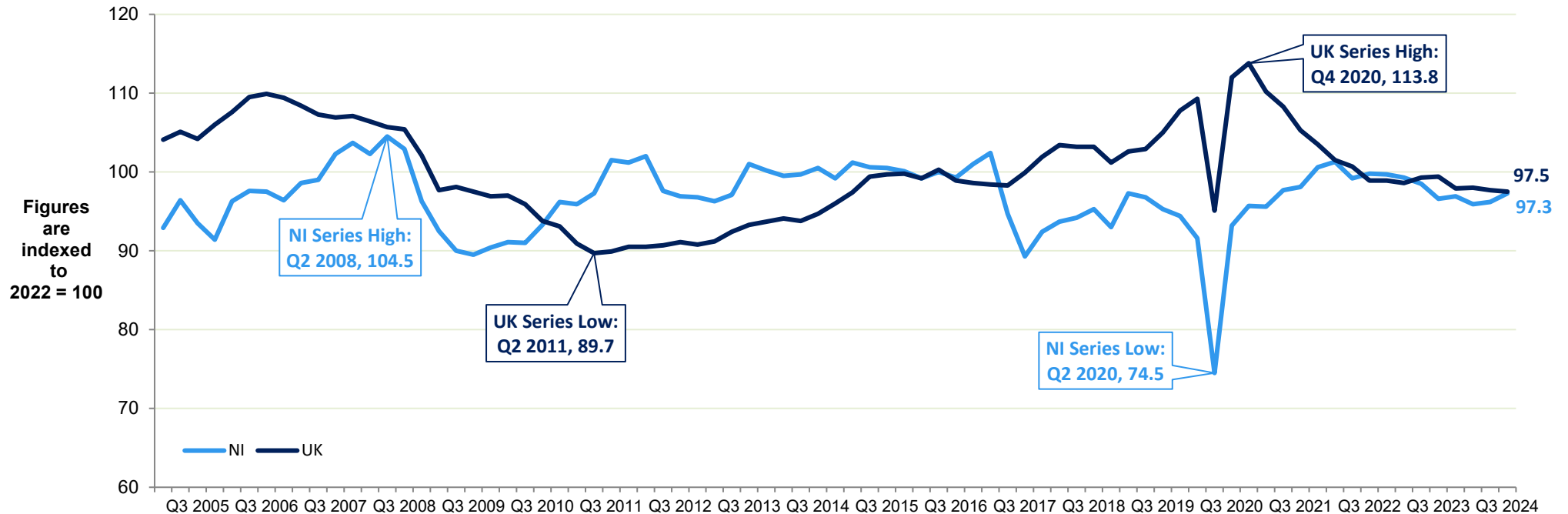
# 1 Summary of Index of Production

## Change in IOP

The seasonally adjusted estimate for the NI IOP for Quarter 3 2024 showed:

- an increase of 1.2% over the quarter from the Quarter 2 2024 revised estimate;
- an increase of 0.8% over the year from the Quarter 3 2023 revised estimate; and
- a decrease of 2.0% when the most recent four quarters are compared to the previous four quarters.

Figure 1.1 IOP, NI & UK, Q1 2005 – Q3 2024



[Download Q3 2024 Data](#)

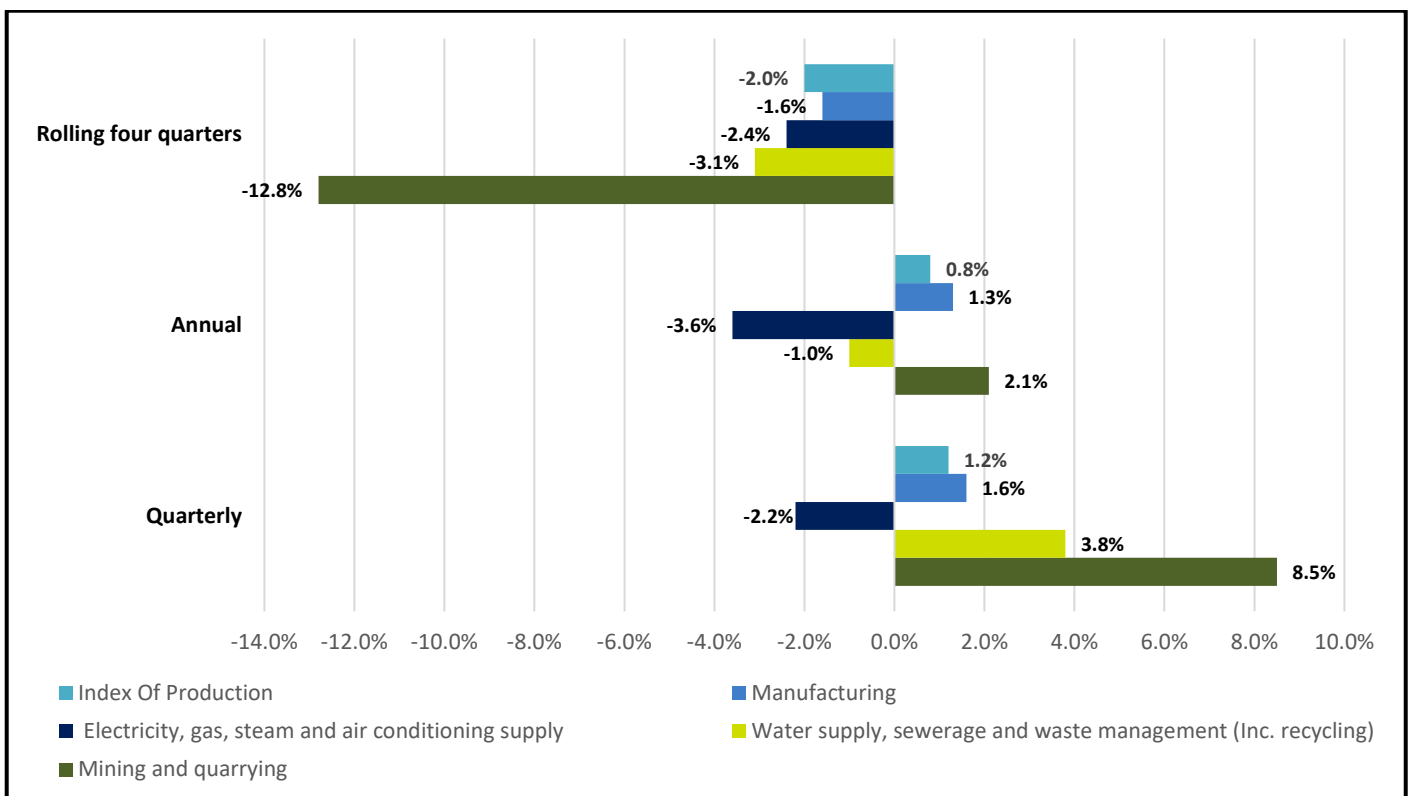
## Commentary

Output in the NI Production sector increased by 1.2% in real terms over the third quarter of 2024. The UK Production sector decreased by 0.2% over the same period. Over the year there was an increase in NI output (0.8%) and a decrease in the UK (1.9%). NI output has been on a downward trend since Quarter 4 2022, with quarterly decreases seen in 5 of the last 8 quarters.

The two series followed broadly similar trends, although the NI index saw a steeper decline in Quarter 2 2020. The NI IOP fell to its series low in Quarter 2 2020 but has since recovered to be 3.1% above the pre-pandemic level seen in Quarter 4 2019. Since Quarter 1 2022 the NI and UK series have continued to follow a similar trend, however the UK index remains 9.6% below its pre-pandemic level.

In Quarter 3 2024 NI output is 30.6% above the series low (Quarter 2 2020) but remains 6.9% below the series high (Quarter 2 2008).

**Figure 1.2 NI IOP Quarterly, Annual and Rolling Four Quarter Changes at sector level Quarter 3 2024<sup>1,2</sup>**

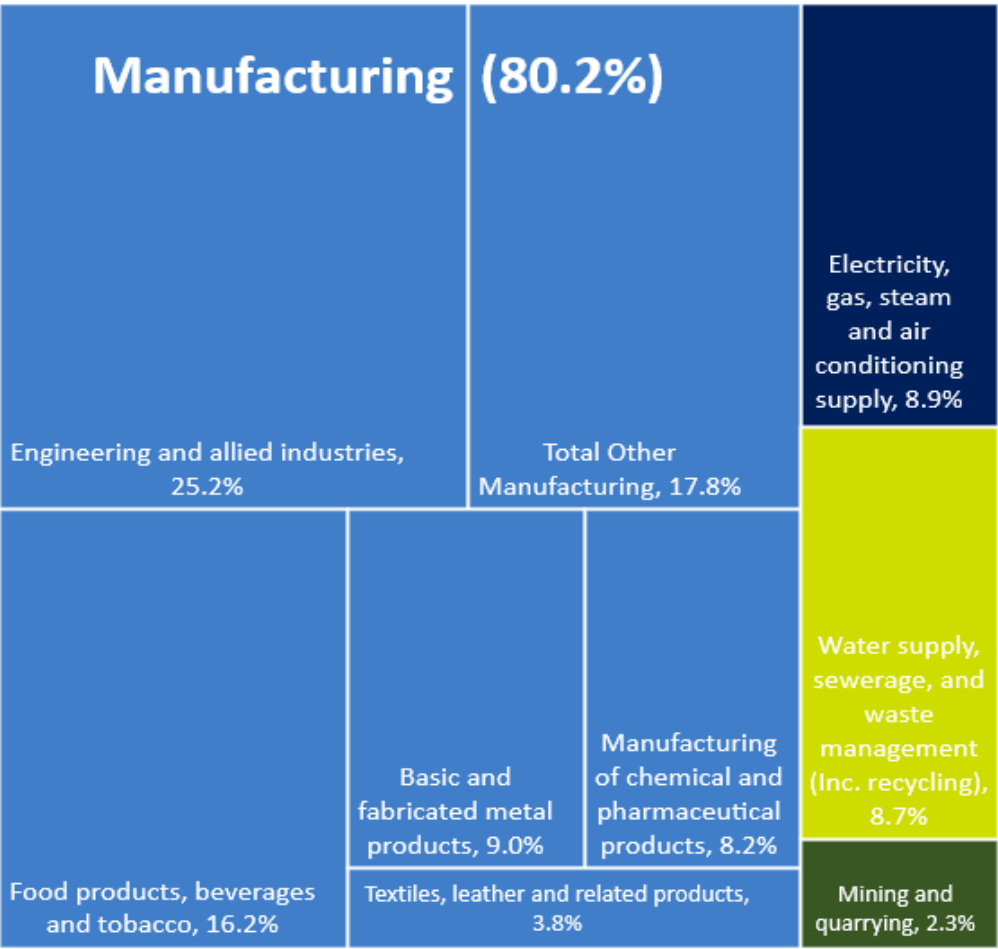


<sup>1</sup> For further information on weights see Regional GVA information on page 5.

<sup>2</sup> Note that each broad sector index and the overall IOP index are seasonally adjusted independently of each other. It is not appropriate to directly compare the changes in the broad sectors to the changes in the overall IOP index.

The Production sector is dominated by Manufacturing, which accounts for approximately 80.2% of total production Gross Value Added (GVA) at 2022 prices. It is comprised of six subsectors, as shown in Figure 2.1.

**Figure 2.1 IOP sector split (based on 2022 GVA)**



Further information on these subsectors is available in the [IOP Tables](#).

## 2 Production output by sector

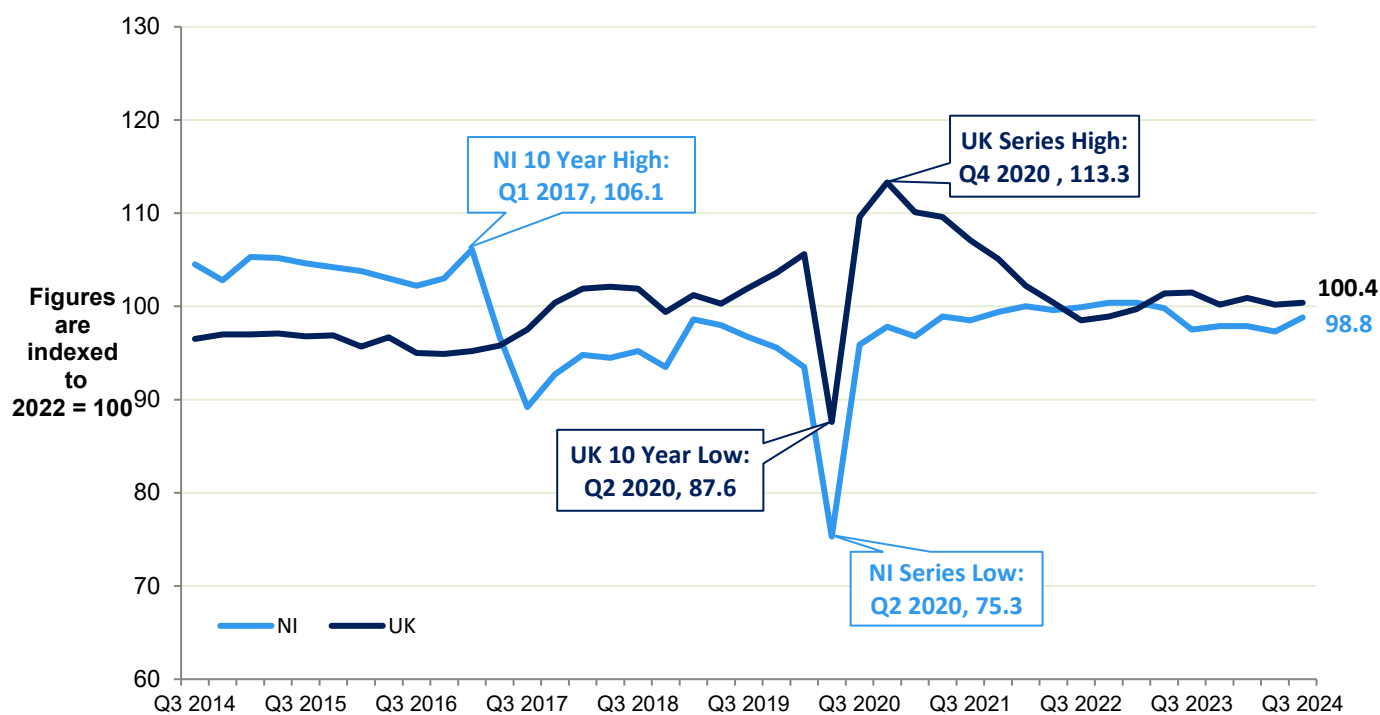
### 2.1 Manufacturing

**Manufacturing sector (SIC07 Section C) - (weight = 80.2% of IOP):** Manufacturing involves the transformation of materials into new products (outputs).

#### Key findings

- The NI seasonally adjusted figures show increases of 1.6% over the quarter, 1.3% over the year and a decrease of 1.6% on a rolling four quarters basis.
- The UK seasonally adjusted figures show an increase of 0.2% over the quarter, a decrease of 1.1% over the year and no change on a rolling four quarters basis.
- NI output is 6.8% below the ten year high seen in Quarter 1 2017.
- NI output is 31.2% above the series low recorded in Quarter 2 2020.

**Figure 2.1 Manufacturing sector, NI & UK, Q3 2014 – Q3 2024**



[Download Q3 2024 Data](#)

The UK and NI indices have had a broadly similar trend in the Manufacturing sector since Quarter 3 2017. The NI index fell to a series low in Quarter 2 2020 which was also a ten year low for the UK index. Following the recovery period, the UK index has been generally outperforming the NI series. In Quarter 3 2024 NI Manufacturing was 3.4% above the pre-pandemic level seen in Quarter 4 2019 while the UK Manufacturing index was 3.1% below its Quarter 4 2019 level.

## 2.2 Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply

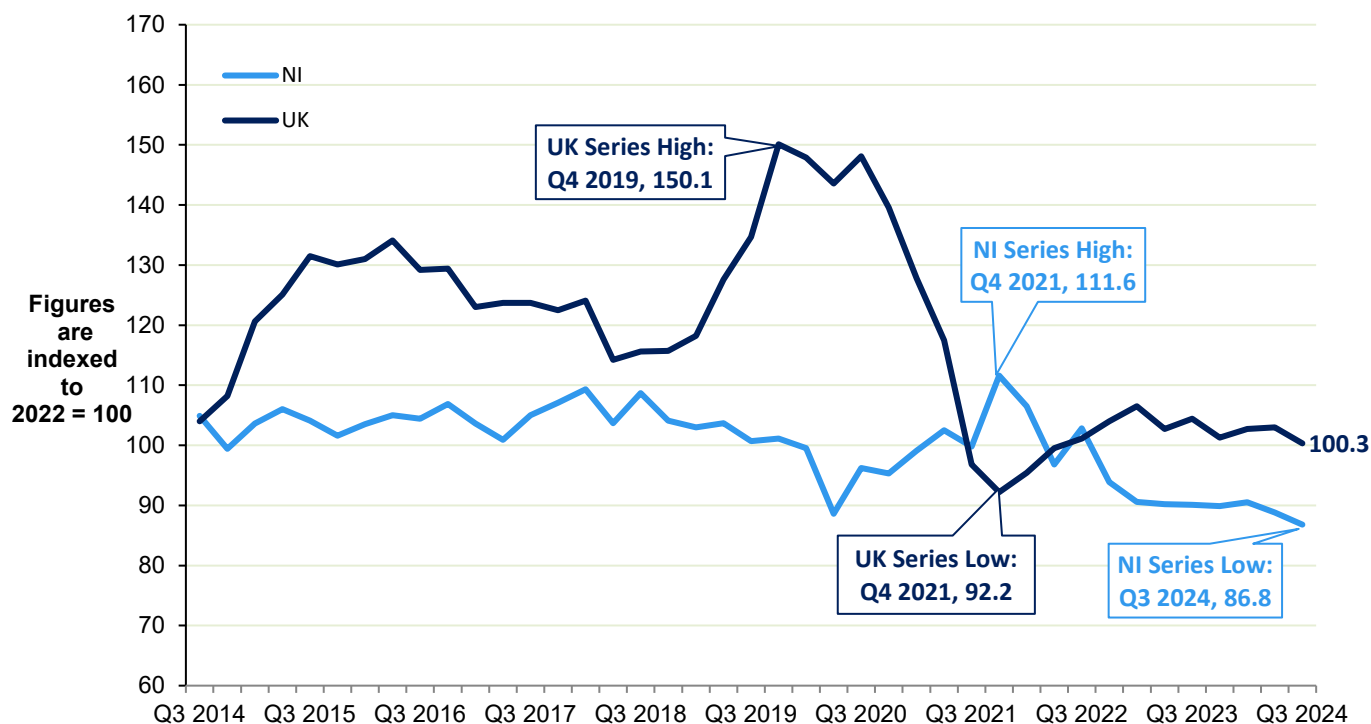
### Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply (SIC07 Section D) (weight = 8.9% of IOP):

This sector includes the activity of providing electric power, natural gas, steam, hot water and the like through a permanent infrastructure (network) of lines, mains and pipes. Also included is its distribution in industrial parks or residential buildings. Therefore, the operation of electric and gas utilities are included.

### Key findings

- The NI seasonally adjusted figures showed decreases of 2.2% over the quarter, 3.6% over the year and 2.4% on a rolling four quarters basis.
- The seasonally adjusted figures for the UK show decreases of 2.6% over the quarter, 3.9% over the year and 2.5% on a rolling four quarters basis.
- The Quarter 3 2024 NI estimate is 22.2% below the series high recorded in Quarter 4 2021.
- NI output is now at a series low.

**Figure 2.2 Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply, NI & UK, Q3 2014 – Q3 2024**



[Download Q3 2024 Data](#)

The NI index remained relatively stable between Quarter 3 2014 and Quarter 2 2019 while, during the same period, the UK index showed greater variation. NI output has been on a downward trend since the series high seen in Quarter 4 2021. NI output in this sector is 14.1% below the pre-pandemic level of Quarter 4 2019, while UK output is 33.2% below its Quarter 4 2019 level.

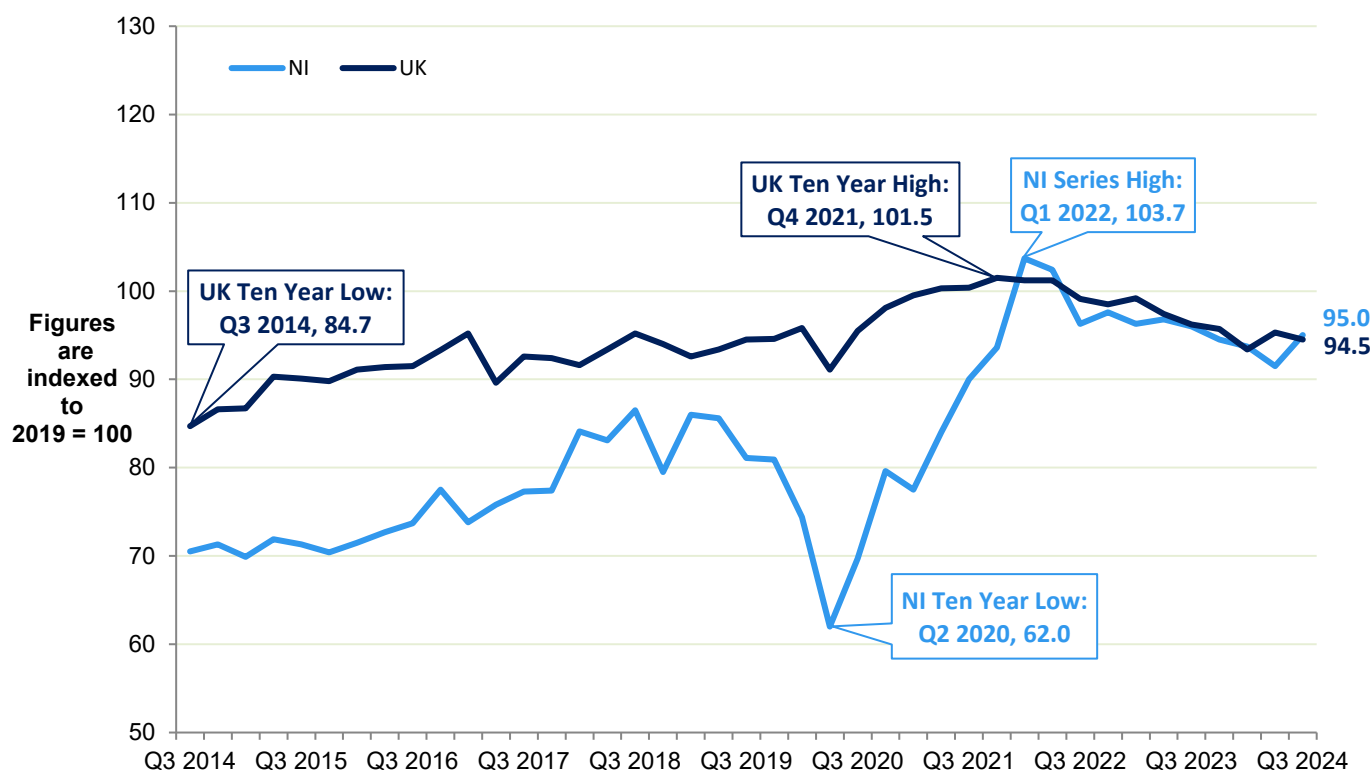
## 2.3 Water supply, sewerage and waste management (Inc. recycling)

**Water supply, sewerage, and waste management (Inc. recycling) (SIC07 Section E) (weight = 8.7% of IOP):** This section covers activities related to the management (including collection, treatment and disposal) of various forms of waste, such as solid or non-solid industrial or household waste, as well as contaminated sites. Activities of water supply are also grouped in this section since they are often carried out in connection with, or by units also engaged in, the treatment of sewage.

### Key findings

- The NI seasonally adjusted figures increased by 3.8% over the quarter and decreased by 1.0% over the year and 3.1% on a rolling four quarters basis.
- The UK reported decreases of 0.8% over the quarter, 1.8% over the year and 3.2% on a rolling four quarters basis.
- The NI estimate is 8.4% below the series high seen in Quarter 1 2022.
- NI output is 53.2% above the ten year low recorded in Quarter 2 2020.

**Figure 2.3 Water supply, sewerage and waste management (Inc. recycling), NI & UK, Q3 2014 – Q3 2024**



[Download Q3 2024 Data](#)

The UK index has generally been outperforming the NI index in this sector since Quarter 3 2014. NI output saw a substantially larger decrease in 2020 than the UK output but subsequently recovered to reach a series high in Quarter 1 2022. Since then, NI output has been on a downward trend but remains 17.4% above the pre-pandemic level seen in Quarter 4 2019. The UK series is 0.1% below its Quarter 4 2019 level.



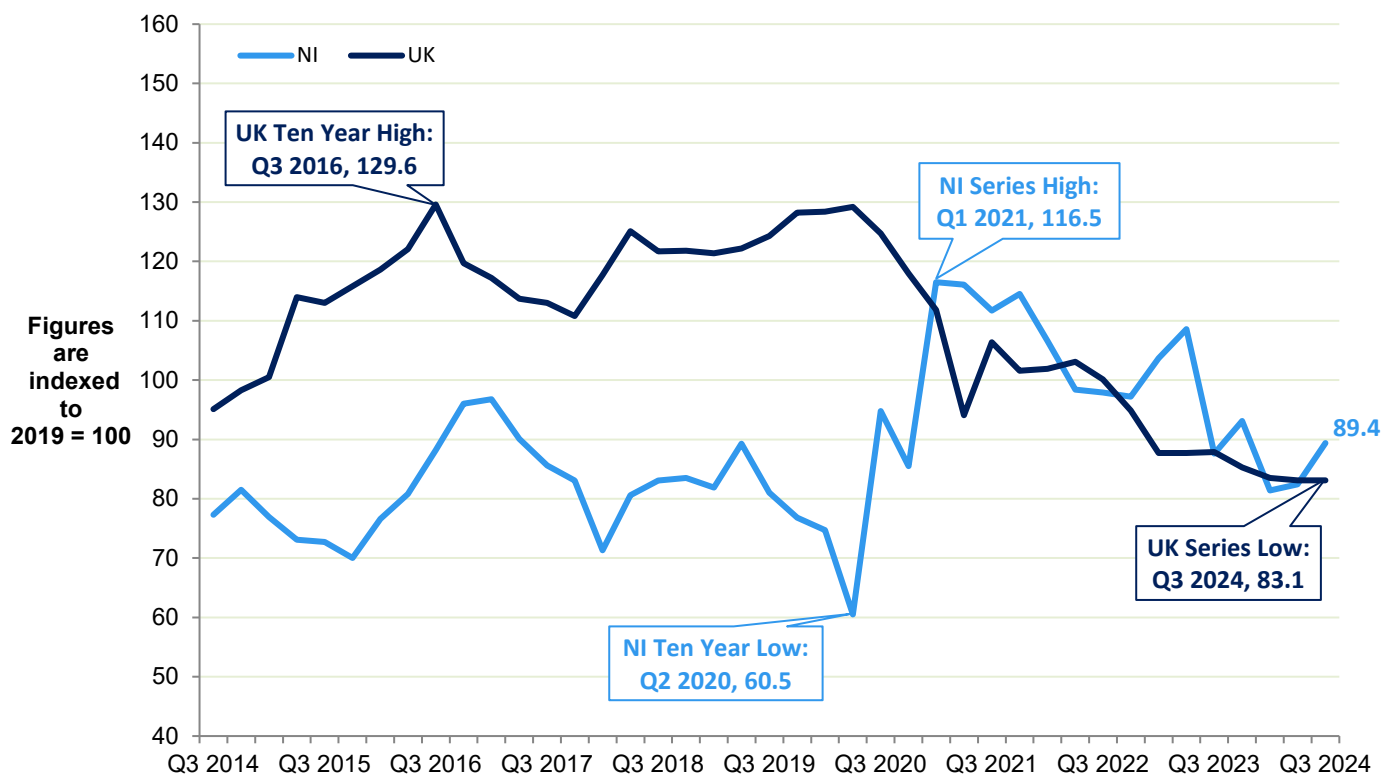
## 2.4 Mining and quarrying

**Mining and quarrying (SIC07 Section B) (weight = 2.3% of IOP):** This section covers the extraction of minerals occurring naturally as solids (coal and ores), liquids (petroleum) or gases (natural gas). Extraction can be achieved by different methods such as underground or surface mining, well operation, seabed mining, etc.

### Key findings

- The NI seasonally adjusted figures show increases of 8.5% over the quarter, 2.1% over the year and a decrease of 12.8% on a rolling four quarters basis.
- The UK seasonally adjusted figures reached a series low in Quarter 2 2024 and showed no change over the quarter to Quarter 3 2024, and showed decreases of 5.5% over the year, and 6.5% on a rolling four quarters basis.
- NI output is 23.2% below the series high recorded in Quarter 1 2021.
- NI output is 47.7% above its ten year low (Quarter 2 2020)

**Figure 2.4 Mining and quarrying, NI & UK, Q3 2014 – Q3 2024**



[Download Q3 2024 Data](#)

Both the NI and the UK indices have shown volatility in the Mining and quarrying sector. Since Quarter 3 2014 the UK has generally performed better than NI in this sector until Quarter 1 2021. In NI this sector is currently 16.5% above the pre-pandemic level reported in Quarter 4 2019, whereas the UK sector is 35.2% below its Quarter 4 2019 level and has continued at its series low.

## 3 Background Notes

### Further Information

Data published within this bulletin is available to download from our [website](#) and the new NISRA [Data Portal](#).

Detailed [background information](#) documents and [methodology](#) information have also been published online for users to refer to for more detailed information on the IOP.

### Data collection and estimates

The following provides an overview of the IOP coverage response rates for Quarter 3 2024, compared to overall median rates for 2023, 2022 and 2021:

	Quarter 3 2024	2023 (median)*	2022 (median)*	2021 (median)*
Coverage response rate (returned turnover)	68%	68%	66%	69%

\*median value achieved at IOP database closure of quarters 1 to 4 for 2021, 2022 and 2023

### Changes to recent releases

Quarter	Change	Detail
Quarter 1 2024	Revised 2019 GVA	Figures in this publication have been weighted using the revised Northern Ireland 2019 GVA which became available on 24 April 2024.
Quarter 3 2024	Updated 2022 GVA Reference Year	The <a href="#">UK National Accounts, The Blue Book: 2024</a> was published on 31 October 2024. For the last three years the reference year and base year have remained at 2019 due to the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the economy. In line with Blue Book 2024 we have moved the base year on to 2022 as part of our production process. Because the base year has been moved forward over a longer time period than usual, the revisions to volume estimates as a result of changing base years may be larger than usual.

### Next publication

The next bulletin is due to be published on 20 March 2025.

### If you require any further information, please contact:

Stephanie Bruce  
Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch  
Floor 1  
Stranmillis Court  
Colby House  
Email: [economicstats@nisra.gov.uk](mailto:economicstats@nisra.gov.uk)  
X (Formerly Twitter): [@NISRA](#)

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