

Statistical Press Release
Northern Ireland Economic Statistics:

9.30am - Thursday 30th March 2023

Northern Ireland Composite Economic Index Quarter 4 2022

The Northern Ireland Composite Economic Index (NICEI) Quarter 4 2022 was published today by the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA).

Key points:

- In the fourth quarter of 2022, the NICEI indicates that economic output increased by 1.4% over the quarter, 1.3% over the year and increased by 3.0% on a rolling four quarters basis to December 2022.
- Comparing the change in economic output over three years i.e. Quarter 4 2022 and Quarter 4 2019 (the previous Quarter 4 before the pandemic), economic output is now 5.6% above pre-pandemic levels.
- Analysis of the contribution of sectors to change in the NICEI over the latest quarter (1.4%) was driven by increased activity in the Construction sector (0.6 pps), Services sector (0.5 pps) and the Public Sector (0.1 pps). Whilst the Production sector had a small negative contribution (0.1 pps).
- Although the measures are not produced on a fully equivalent basis, comparisons with the UK show that NI experienced the higher growth over the quarter (1.4% vs 0.0%) and over the year (1.3% vs 0.4%) but weaker growth over the rolling annual average (3.0% vs 4.0%). Economic Activity in NI increased triennially whilst the UK experienced a reduction (5.6% vs -0.8%).
- NI's Private sector output as measured by the NICEI increased by 1.6% over the quarter, by 1.0% over the year, by 3.1% on a rolling four quarter basis and by 5.7% on a triennial basis.
- The NICEI Public Sector (employee jobs) index increased by 0.6% over the quarter, by 2.3% over the year, by 2.6% on a rolling four quarter basis and by 5.4% on a triennial basis.

Commentary

- The NICEI indicates NI economic output increased by 1.4% in real terms over the quarter and by 1.3% over the year. In addition, output has increased at a faster rate triennially (5.6%) compared to the annual change. The annualised rate of growth (i.e. the most recent four quarters compared to the previous four quarters) increased by 3.0% over the period.
- A large increase in activity in the private Construction sector (8.8%) coupled with a strong performance in the Services sector (1.0%) led to the NICEI recording a sizeable increase economic activity in the final quarter of 2022. The services sector (which accounts for 52% of NI GVA) continues to have a strong recovery post pandemic and has been the main driver of growth in the NICEI's performance annually, triennially and over the rolling four quarter average.
- Economic activity had increased gradually in recent years (2013-2019) until the onset of the pandemic, following the prolonged downturn post 2007. During the pandemic the NICEI reached a series low in Q2 2020, however economic activity post pandemic has recovered substantially and in Q4 2022 a new series high was reached. Economic activity is now 27.9% above the series low point in Q2 2020.
- In Q4 2022, the NICEI has now reached a series high and is 0.1% above the previous maximum value recorded in Quarter 3 2007. However, by comparison, UK GDP in Q4 2022 is estimated to be 14.2% higher than its pre-economic downturn peak of Quarter 1 2008.

Notes to Editors

1. The statistical bulletin, fact sheet and associated tables are available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/economic-output-statistics/ni-composite-economic-index>
2. The NISRA Northern Ireland Composite Economic Index (NICEI) is a quarterly measure of the performance of the Northern Ireland (NI) economy based on available official statistics.
3. The NICEI combines existing published quarterly indices (i.e. Index of Services (IOS), Index of Production (IOP), Quarterly Construction Enquiry (QCE)), public sector employee jobs data from the Quarterly Employment Survey (QES), and unpublished agricultural output data from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural

Affairs (DAERA). These indices are weighted using ONS Regional Accounts Gross Value Added (GVA) data to provide a proxy measure of total economic output in the NI economy on a quarterly basis.

4. The NICEI output measures relate to the fourth quarter (October - December) of 2022. These estimates are based on surveys of businesses and estimates of change are subject to sampling error. Figures for a quarter may be revised if more complete information subsequently becomes available.
5. The NICEI back series is calculated each quarter, typically the revisions to the NICEI are reasonably minor. The revisions this quarter were more noticeable, further information is available in the detailed statistical bulletin available at: [Northern Ireland Composite Economic Index](#)
6. This report will be of interest to Ministers, policy makers, public bodies, the business community, banks, economic commentators, academics and the general public with an interest in the local economy.
7. Further information and tables from each of the data sources are available on the [NISRA - Economic and Labour Market Statistics Website](#).
8. For media enquiries, please contact DfE Press Office on 028 9052 9604. Outside office hours, please contact the Duty Press Officer via pager number 07623 974 383 and your call will be returned.
9. Feedback is welcomed and should be addressed to:

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