

**Research Briefing**

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# Industries in the UK

The UK's economy is dominated by services industries, which includes retail, hospitality and finance, as well as public services like health and education.

Other non-services industries, including manufacturing, construction, agriculture and utilities, account for around a fifth of economic output altogether. The share attributed to manufacturing over the past 30 years has decreased while the share attributed to services has increased.

Download the Excel file accompanying this briefing to see economic output and jobs data for UK industrial sectors from 1990 to 2024, including by region.

## 1

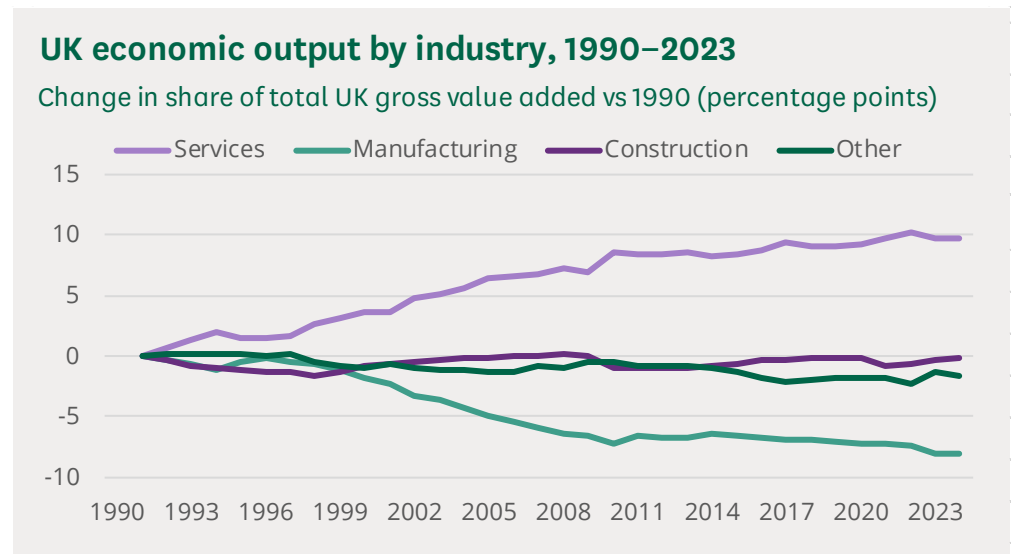
### Economic output by industry

In 2023, [data from the Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) shows that services industries accounted for 80% of the UK's total gross value added (GVA).

GVA is a measure of economic output that is like gross domestic product, or GDP. GVA measures the value of products and services produced minus the costs incurred in production, though not including labour costs. GDP is GVA plus taxes and minus subsidies on products.

Since 1990 the share of the economy attributed to services has grown from 70% to 80%, while the share attributed to manufacturing has decreased by a similar amount, from 17% to 9%.

As the chart below shows, the share of the economy attributed to the other main industry groups (agriculture, mining, construction and utilities) has remained broadly stable over the same period.

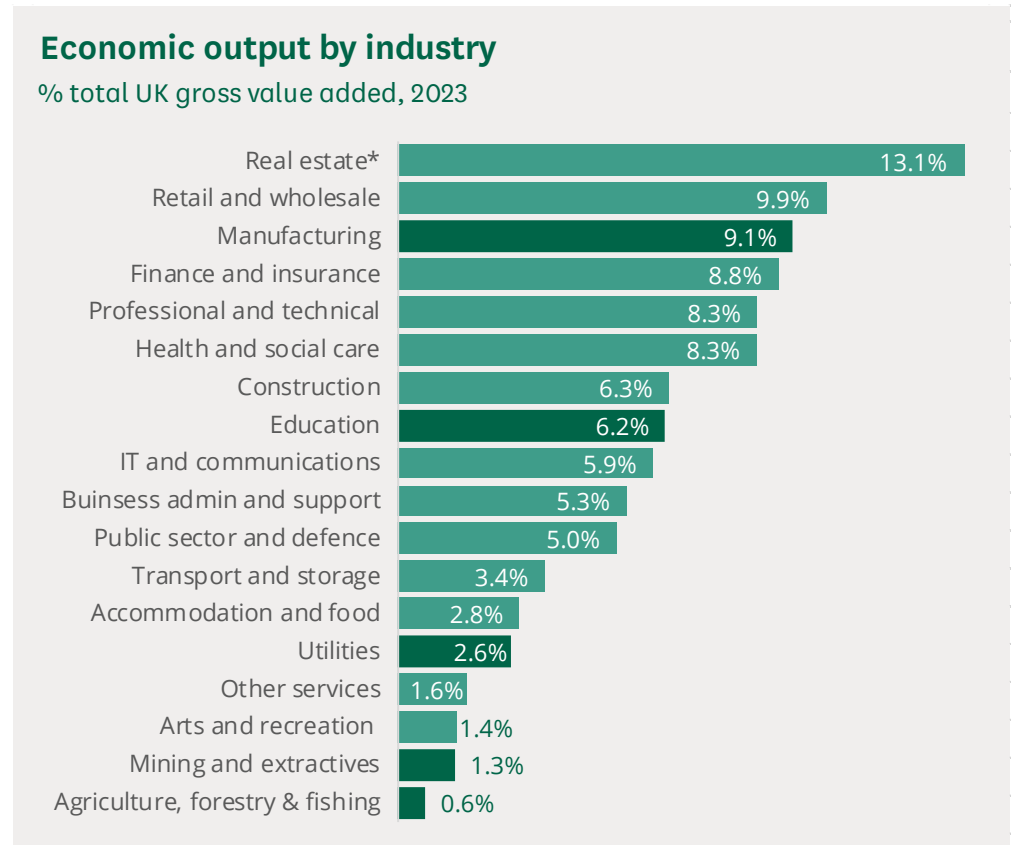


Source: ONS, [GDP output approach - low level aggregates, 30 September 2024](#). See notes and sources below for more on the ONS' data series.

A more detailed breakdown of how much each industry contributes to the UK economy is in the chart below.

Real estate was the largest individual industry accounting for 13.1% of GVA. However, most of this is the value of “imputed rents” which is a hypothetical estimate of what owner-occupiers would pay if they rented rather than owned their homes and not output generated by the industry.

After the real estate industry, retail and wholesale accounted for 9.9% of GVA and manufacturing 9.1%.



Source: ONS, [GDP output approach - low level aggregates, 30 September 2024](#)

Note: Real estate activities includes 'imputed rents' which are estimates of the hypothetical rental value of homes that owners live in. This is an attempt to include the value of housing services going to owner-occupiers and not output directly produced by the industry.

Bars in light green are the service industries while bars in dark green are non-service industries.

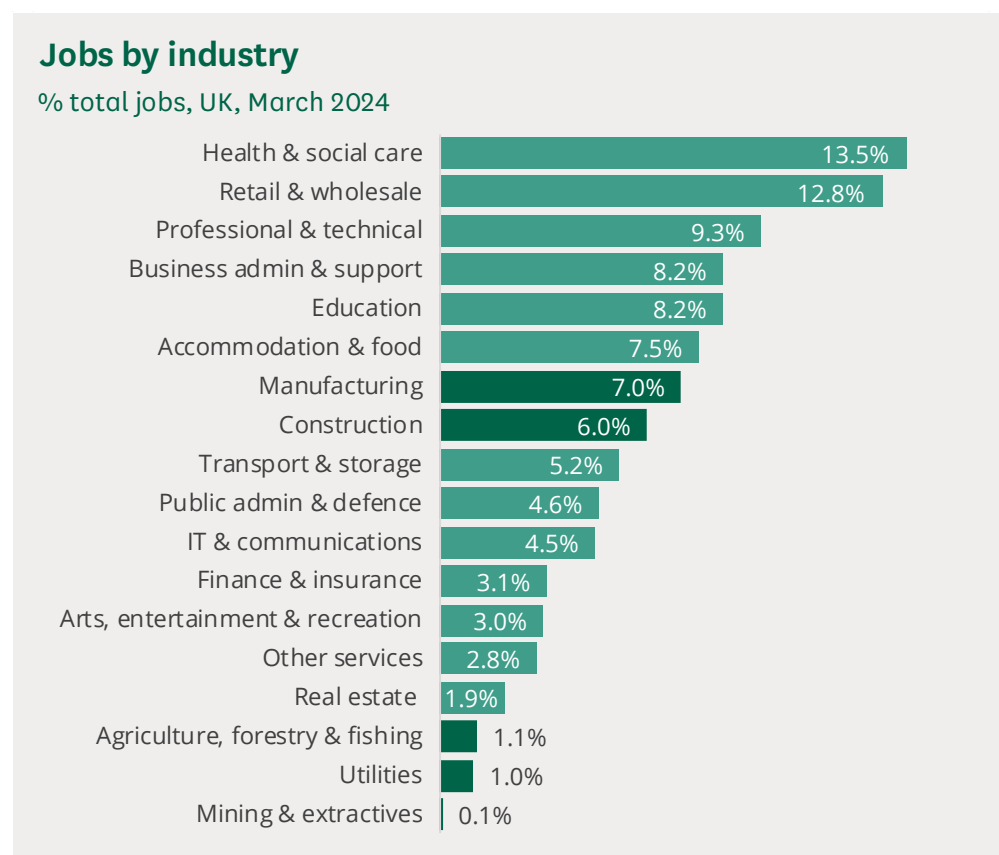
## 2 Jobs by industry

Services account for an even larger share of jobs in the UK (84.8%) than they do economic output (80%).<sup>1</sup>

The largest proportion of jobs are in the health and social care sector (13.5% of all jobs) and the retail and wholesale sector (12.8% of all jobs).

The chart below shows a breakdown of jobs by major industrial sectors.

<sup>1</sup> ONS, [Workforce Jobs via NOMIS database](#) [accessed 21 August 2024]



Source: ONS, [Workforce Jobs via NOMIS database](#) [accessed 21 August 2024]

Bars in light green are the service industries while bars in dark green are non-service industries.

Industries which account for a greater share of jobs than economic output include accommodation and food service activities (7.5% of jobs vs 3.2% of economic output), the arts, entertainment and recreation sector (3.0% vs 1.4%) and health and social care (13.5% vs 8.0%).

Industries which account for a smaller share of jobs than their share of economic output include mining and extractives (0.1% vs 0.6%), finance and insurance (3.1% vs 9.0%) and manufacturing (7.0% vs 9.4%).

### 3

## Industries by country and region

London is the most atypical UK region in terms of its economic output. Services accounted for 93% of the city's output compared to 81% across the UK in 2022, the [latest ONS regional data available](#).

In particular, the financial services, IT and communications and professional and technical sectors are much larger in London relative to its overall economic output than the UK average.

Manufacturing on the other hand accounts for just 2% of London's output compared to 9% across the UK.

By contrast, the north of England, Yorkshire and the Humber, the Midlands and Wales have relatively large manufacturing sectors and smaller services sectors (though services still account for over 70% of output in each of these regions).

Services dominated by public sector work (public administration and defence, education, and health and social care) and the utilities sector account for greater shares of the economies of Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the North East of England than they do across the UK overall.

The relative size of the construction sector is broadly similar across regions, though forms a larger share of the economies of the East of England (8.8%) and Northern Ireland (8.2%) than the UK overall (6.2%).

The Excel file accompanying this briefing allows users to explore economic output and jobs data by industry for each UK country and region.

Further economic indicators by country and region can be found in the Library briefing: [Regional and national economic indicators](#).

## 4 Notes and sources

### 4.1 Timeliness and updates

The data in this briefing reflects the latest data available as of 30 September 2024. Please check the source datasets using the links provided below, for the latest data.

In general, national economic output data is published every six weeks, regional jobs data every quarter and regional economic output data every year (in spring). We aim to update this briefing in conjunction with the annual regional economic output data henceforth.

### 4.2 Economic output

Data on the economic output of industries is produced by the ONS as part of the [estimates of GDP](#). This data is produced to internationally agreed standards and enables industries to be compared with one another and over time. The source for the information in this briefing is the [low level aggregates](#)

[data](#) that is published alongside the GDP estimates with data going back to 1990.

The estimates of economic output by industry and region or country of the UK are from the ONS dataset [Regional gross value added \(balanced\) by industry](#)).

## 4.3

### Jobs

Data on jobs by industry and region is available from the ONS [Workforce Jobs](#) series, which is published quarterly. The [ONS says it is the preferred data source for breaking down all jobs by industry](#).

The number of jobs is not the same as the number of people employed, as individuals may hold more than one job. Workforce jobs is the sum of employee jobs, self-employment jobs, HM forces personnel and government-supported trainees.

Workforce jobs data can also be accessed via the [ONS NOMIS web database](#).

Data on jobs by industry and constituency is available from the ONS Business Register and Employment Survey reports published annually – however, statistics for new constituency boundaries have not yet been published. High level results for the whole of the UK can be accessed from the [ONS website](#). Detailed results for Great Britain can be accessed from the [ONS NOMIS database](#) and for Northern Ireland, from the [Northern Ireland Research and Statistics Agency](#).

## 4.4

### Classifying industries

Different types of economic activity are grouped together to form industries such as retail or construction. These groupings are officially defined by an international system called the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code.

The way economic activity is classified can have a significant influence on the relative size of an industrial grouping.

The most recent SIC code was published in 2007 (SIC 2007) and corresponds to internationally agreed standards that are used by the UN and EU. The ONS provides further [detailed information and guidance on using SIC 2007](#).

This briefing presents data on the economic contribution of broad industrial groupings:

- Agriculture, forestry & fishing (SIC Code A)

- Mining and extractives (B)
- Manufacturing (C)
- Utilities, comprising electricity, gas, steam & air conditioning supply (D) and water supply (E)
- Construction (F)
- Retail & wholesale (G)
- Transport & storage (H)
- Accommodation & food (I)
- IT & communications (J)
- Finance & insurance (K)
- Real estate (including 'imputed rents' - estimates of hypothetical rental value of homes that owner-occupiers live in) (L)
- Professional & technical (M)
- Business administration & support (N)
- Public administration & defence (O)
- Education (P)
- Health & social care (Q)
- Arts, entertainment & recreation (R)
- Other services (S)

Economic data on subsectors within the broad industrial groupings above is published in the [low level aggregates data](#) and for smaller industries as part of the ONS Annual Business Survey, [sections A-S spreadsheet](#).

Jobs data on subsectors is available from the Business Register and Employment Survey via the [NOMIS database](#).

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