

Indicator specification:

PLDR collection of population health indicators

Finance Indicators: Local Authority Finance
(FIN_07_18U)



Version: 1.01

Date: June 2020

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Overview

Indicator title

Local Authority Finance: Gross Current Expenditure – Total Services, Upper Tier (FIN_07_18U)

Indicator family name

Local Authority Finance

Summary

This indicator describes the annual gross service expenditure for all services provided by every Upper Tier Local Authority in England between 2007-08 and 2018-19. The gross expenditure describes the total spending by Local Authorities associated with delivering every individual service.

Technical description

The indicator was compiled from annual revenue outturn estimates of Local Authority (LA) revenue expenditure and financing. The Total Gross Service expenditure includes employee costs and running expenses for all services. Expenditure values are given on the basis of financial years, i.e. from April 1st to March 31st. Values are expressed in thousands (£). Since some services are provided by Lower Tier or by other types of authorities, individual spending figures from Lower Tier LAs were attributed to Upper Tier LAs by aggregating, while from other types of authorities by disaggregating based on annual population ratios. Expenditure values from historic LA geography have been referenced to the 2018 LA geography. This includes changes in name/codes, merges, or splits of old LAs to new LAs based on population ratios for that year. The service expenditure is expressed as the total amount as well as per capita, for direct comparisons. However, expenditure figures were not adjusted for inflation.

Unique Identifier

FIN_07_18U

Construction

Data sources

Outturn revenue data of LAs in England are published annually by the *Local Government Finance - Data Collection Analysis and Accountancy* division of the *Department for Communities and Local Government*. The Local Authority Gross Current Expenditure figures were extracted from annual *Service Expenditure Summary (RSX)* tables. The collection of datasets and additional information about LA revenue outturn data estimates can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and-financing>.

Construction of LA-level data

Some services are provided in Lower and some in Upper tier local authorities (e.g. at County level). LA spending figures thus includes both Upper Tier (UTLA) and Lower Tier (LTLA) authorities (i.e. 152 and 326 respectively in England as of 2018). In order to provide a common denominator for direct comparisons with other types of data, LA expenditures were distributed from Lower to Upper and from Upper to Lower. Further expenditures on specific services also includes spending from “other” authorities. In particular, these are:

- The Greater London Authority
- Combined Authorities
- Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable Authorities
- Fire and Rescue Authorities
- Waste Authorities
- Transport Authorities

All spending by all of the above types of authorities has been included in the calculations of the total LA-level service expenditure, and has been referenced either to LTLAs or UTLAs. Note that the only type of authority for which expenditures have not been taken into account are Park Authorities (however, these show generally low levels of expenditure, mainly within the Cultural and Related services and Central Services). Also note that many of these special local authorities have been abolished and their services incorporated (in part or in whole) into other administrations (for instance Transport Authorities’ services have been transferred to Combined Authorities).

The specific methodology by which the total levels of expenditure per service category are calculated for each Local Authority is as follows:

- LTLA Methodology: Shire Counties’ expenditures were disaggregated to Shire Districts by means of population-based ratios, i.e. annual expenditure was distributed to LTLAs based on their share of population, derived from their total population estimates for that particular year (Source: ONS).

The Greater London Authority expenditure was distributed to London Boroughs by means of distributing expenditure according to population. Expenditures from Combined Authorities, Police Authorities, Fire and Rescue Authorities, Waste Authorities and Transport Authorities were also attributed to LTLAs by means of distributing expenditure according to population for that year. All the above expenditures are aggregated and added to the recorded LTLA service expenditure in order to produce the estimated total service expenditure for that LA.

For the construction of LTLA measures, all expenditure values from historic LA geography have been referenced to the 2018 LA geography. This includes changes in name/codes, merges, or splits of old LAs to new LAs based on population ratios for that year. For instance, after 2009 the (upper tier) Cheshire County Council and the (lower tier) 6 Cheshire Local Authority Districts were abolished and replaced by two new unitary authorities, Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester. In order to

calculate the “would-be” Cheshire East’s spending figures in 2008, values for the 3 of the 6 historic districts that formed Cheshire East as well as 47.28% of the historical Cheshire County spending were aggregated.

- UTLA Methodology: Shire Districts’ expenditures are attributed to Shire Counties by means of aggregating. Expenditures from the Greater London Authority, Combined Authorities, Police Authorities, Fire and Rescue Authorities, Waste Authorities and Transport Authorities have been disaggregated to UTLAs by means of population ratio, and referenced to the 2018 Local Authority geography, similarly to the LTLA methodology.

Note that spending categories are not fully consistent within the time period; introduction of new services (and removal of others) suggests that total expenditure values may not be directly comparable between years. For instance, Public Health was introduced in 2013, while Court services were removed in 2009.

Presentation

Breakdowns

Time period

Financial year (April 1st to March 31st) data: 2007-08 to 2018-19.

Geography

Upper Tier Local Authorities (2018 reference).

Coverage

England.

Disclosure control

This indicator has been produced using only publicly available datasets.

Output FIN_07_18U.csv

Column name	Description
Year	Start of financial year, i.e. “2015” refers to the financial year “2015/16”.
UTLA18CD	Upper Tier Local Authority Code.
UTLA18NM	Upper Tier Local Authority Name.
Pop_Est_Total	The total population estimate of that LA in that year.
Total_Services_GrossExpen	The total gross amount of service expenditure in £1000’s.
Total_Services_GrossExpen_PerCap	The total gross service expenditure per capita in £1000’s.

Revision history

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1.01	Jun 2020	Update to 2018-19 data; minor changes in the methodology
1.00	Aug 2019	First release