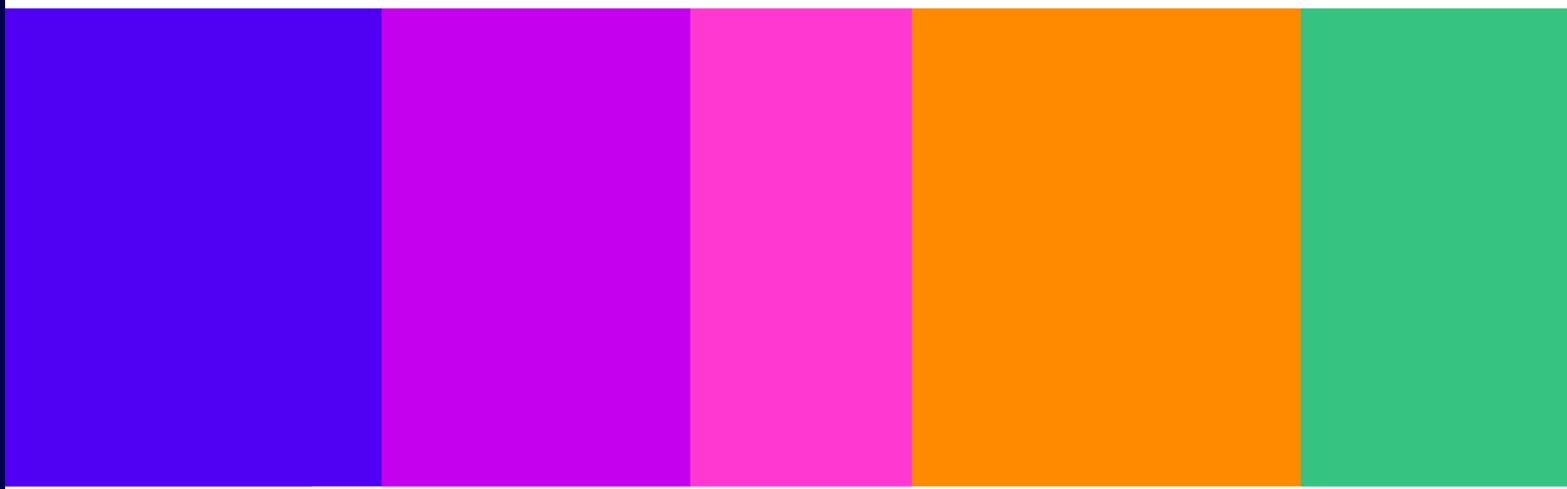


Limiting/Impacting Conditions Tracker

Notification of changes

Report

Published 7 May 2025



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Overview

As a producer of official statistics, Ofcom follows the guidance set out in in [Changing or ceasing to publish official statistics – Government Analysis Function \(civilservice.gov.uk\)](#). In line with this guidance, where substantial changes are made to a piece of research that is established as an official statistic, we must notify stakeholders of the changes that are planned to be made and allow time for stakeholders to provide input or feedback if they wish to.

This document sets out our proposal to discontinue Ofcom’s Limiting/Impacting Conditions Tracker. If you have any queries or if you would like to comment on our plans, please contact market.research@ofcom.org.uk.

Background

Limiting/Impacting Conditions Tracker

Ofcom is an evidence-based regulator and research is central to all our decisions. When commissioning research, it is important that we consider all consumers, including those who are disabled or have a long-term condition.

To this end, Ofcom has conducted the Limiting/Impacting Conditions Tracker, which is a regular tracking survey to draw comparisons between consumers with and without a condition in terms of their use of communication services, as well as understand differences between people with different types of conditions. This information helps Ofcom to make informed policy decisions and better understand a range of consumers within the markets it regulates by ensuring that all broadband, telephone and TV customers can shop around with confidence, switch easily between providers, and are treated fairly.

In July 2024 Ofcom and the Communications Consumer Panel (CCP) [published research](#) which sought to better understand how our research can be more inclusive of disabled people, people with long-term conditions, and/or people who may face barriers but who do not consider themselves disabled. After conducting this research, we paused the Limiting/Impacting Conditions Tracker to consider the impact on our wider programme of research.

Developing our approach to understanding disability and long-term conditions

Our plans – in brief

- Exploring how we can use the data we already collect to produce more detailed analysis of the differences in experience between different groups.
- Reviewing the way that we ask about disability, health and other long-term conditions across our surveys covering all sectors we regulate. This will help us to improve the quality of the data we collect and provide more consistency across our research.
- Discontinuing the Limiting/Impacting conditions tracker.

Using our existing data to produce more detailed insights and analysis

We plan to further embed understanding of disability and long-term conditions into our research programme by making greater use of existing data to provide evidence and insight about different experiences within the communications sector.

We will also explore how we can conduct more intersectional analysis to understand how people's experiences with communications services differ depending on if they have a disability or long-term condition and how that interacts with other factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background and whether consumers live in urban or rural areas.

Reviewing how we ask about disability and long-term conditions

In July 2024 we published jointly commissioned research by Ofcom and the Communications Consumer Panel that explored a more inclusive approach to designing and reporting on studies involving disabled people, people with long-term conditions, and/or people who may face related barriers but do not identify as disabled. As part of this research, we engaged with a broad range of expert stakeholders representing the following types of sectors: charity, government and public sector, market and social research, academia, and diversity, equality and inclusion. You can find the full research report [here](#), and more detail on the methodology in [this appendix](#).

The findings of the research prompted us to review the way we ask about disability across our surveys to enable us to better understand the experiences of disabled people and people with long-term conditions across the sectors we regulate.

This will include updating the language used to be more inclusive and better reflect how people describe their own experiences. However, we also recognise that the medical model of disability continues to be a valid approach in helping us understand where differences may exist in the

experiences of individuals. The categories in the medical model align with legal definitions of disability, which means the evidence can be used to help assess whether communications providers are fulfilling legal obligations. It is also important to us that we collect information in sufficient detail to enable us to identify differences in experience not only between people who are disabled or have a long-term condition compared to those who do not, but also between conditions.

We will consider all these factors when reviewing how we ask about disability and intend to develop a standardised approach to ensure this is consistent across our surveys. This will help us to build up an effective picture of different experiences across the sectors we regulate. This will also enable us to make comparisons where relevant.

Discontinuing the Limiting/Impacting conditions survey

Given these changes we are making, we will no longer need a tracker focused specifically on 'limiting/impacting conditions' and we are therefore discontinuing it. We will ensure that the key elements of the current tracker are considered in our ongoing work.