



In this bulletin: updated estimates of the Human Development Index (HDI) for St Helena

This Bulletin presents updated and revised estimates of the Human Development Index (HDI). This was first calculated and published by the Statistics Office in the Quarter 3 2016 Statistical News, as an additional tool to measure St Helena's progress and a way to compare St Helena to the level of human development in other countries around the world.

The HDI uses data on years of education, life expectancy, and Gross National Income (GNI) per capita. New estimates on life expectancy and GNI per capita were published earlier this year, and years of education have been updated with enrolment figures supplied by the Education Directorate. The statistics and indicators presented in this Bulletin can be downloaded in Excel format from the 'HDI' file on the St Helena Statistics website at: www.sainthelena.gov.sh/statistics-data.

The HDI is calculated and published each year by the United Nations (see hdr.undp.org), but St Helena is not included since it is not a member state of the UN. The estimates for St Helena and the global rankings published in this Bulletin have been calculated as a complement to the international UN estimates.

St Helena's HDI

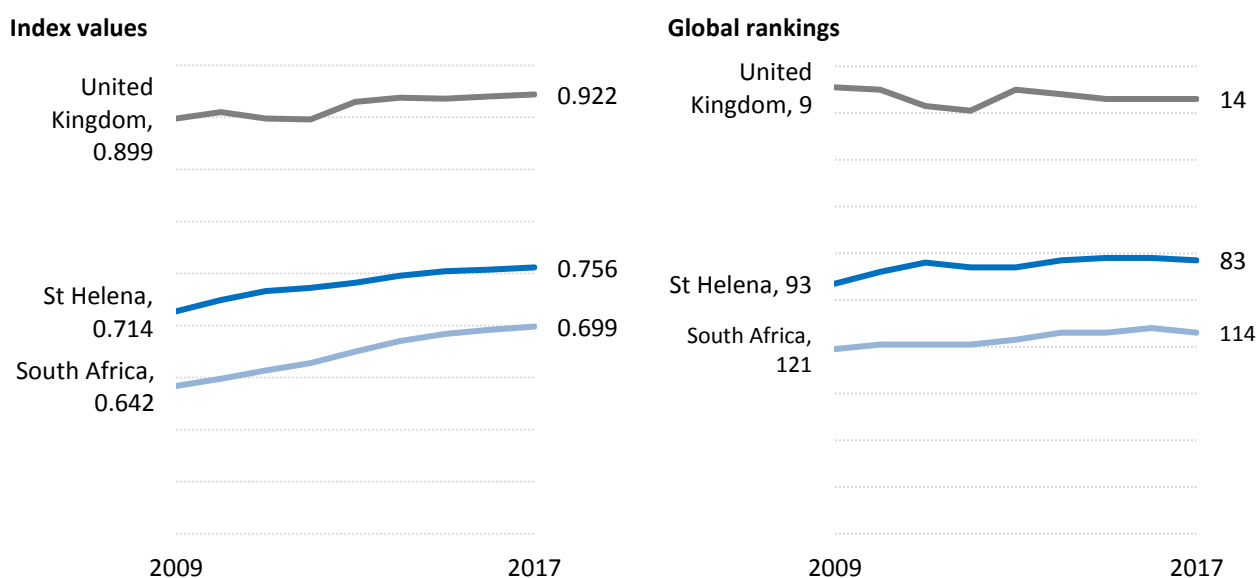
Table 1 presents the estimates of St Helena's HDI from 2009 to 2017, and the rankings compared to other countries (a lower ranking is better – the 'best' country in the world has a ranking of 1). For comparison purposes, the table includes the same estimates for the United Kingdom and South Africa, the two countries with which St Helenians are usually considered to be most closely connected.

Table 1. Human Development Index and global rankings, St Helena, United Kingdom, and South Africa, 2009 to 2017

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Human Development Index									
St Helena	0.714	0.724	0.733	0.736	0.741	0.748	0.752	0.754	0.756
United Kingdom	0.899	0.905	0.899	0.898	0.915	0.919	0.918	0.920	0.922
South Africa	0.642	0.649	0.657	0.664	0.675	0.685	0.692	0.696	0.699
Global rankings									
St Helena	93	88	84	86	86	83	82	82	83
United Kingdom	9	10	17	19	10	12	14	14	14
South Africa	121	119	119	119	117	114	114	112	114

Since 2009 St Helena’s HDI increased from 0.714 to 0.756; this places St Helena in the ‘high’ category of human development, according to the classification used by the United Nations. Compared to other countries around the globe, St Helena’s HDI ranking rose from 93rd (out of 190 countries ranked) to 83rd in the world – an improvement of ten places. Chart 1 illustrates the change in the HDI index and global ranking compared to the United Kingdom and South Africa. In all three countries the value of HDI increased. The ranking of St Helena and South Africa rose by ten and seven places respectively, but the UK’s ranking fell by five places in the same period.

Chart 1. Human Development Index of St Helena, United Kingdom, and South Africa, 2009 to 2017



Components of the Human Development Index

The HDI is calculated as the average (using the geometric mean) of three sub-components which measure three dimensions of human development: incomes, health, and education. Income is measured using Gross National Income per capita in US dollars, adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP), health is measured using life expectancy, and education is measured using the average number of years at school in full-time education (a combination of the average years experienced by adults that have completed their education, and the average years that children can expect to be in full-time education).

Each component is “normalised” based on a maximum standard: if a country achieves these standards, its index value would be 1. For income, it is \$PPP 85,000 per year GNI per capita, for health it is a life expectancy of 85 years, and for education it is a mean period of schooling of current adults of 15 years, and an expected period of schooling of 18 years. Table 2 shows the component index values and their global rankings for St Helena.

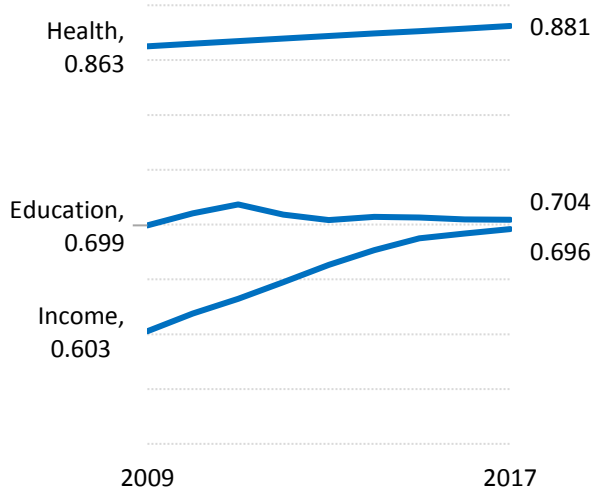
Table 2. Human Development Index components and global rankings, 2009 to 2017

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Human Development Index									
Health component	0.863	0.865	0.867	0.870	0.872	0.874	0.877	0.879	0.881
Education component	0.699	0.710	0.718	0.709	0.704	0.707	0.706	0.705	0.704
Income component	0.603	0.619	0.632	0.647	0.663	0.677	0.687	0.692	0.696
Global rankings									
Health component	46	47	47	47	48	48	49	51	50
Education component	63	61	62	70	73	76	78	83	84
Income component	127	123	120	113	110	106	104	103	104

Chart 2 shows the change in the St Helena index values and global rankings of each component from 2009; all components have increased in value, but the income component increased the fastest, largely due to the additional activity during the construction of St Helena’s airport. St Helena’s rank on the income component is lowest of the three components, at 127th in the world in 2009 before airport construction. But it gained twenty three places to 104th by 2017, after airport construction. St Helena’s rank on the health component of the HDI was relatively stable, at 46th in 2009 and 50th in 2017. But its rank on the education component fell, from 63rd in 2009 to 84th in 2017, as other countries increased their number of years of schooling faster than St Helena.

Chart 2. Human Development Index components, St Helena, 2009 to 2017

Index value for St Helena



Global rankings for St Helena

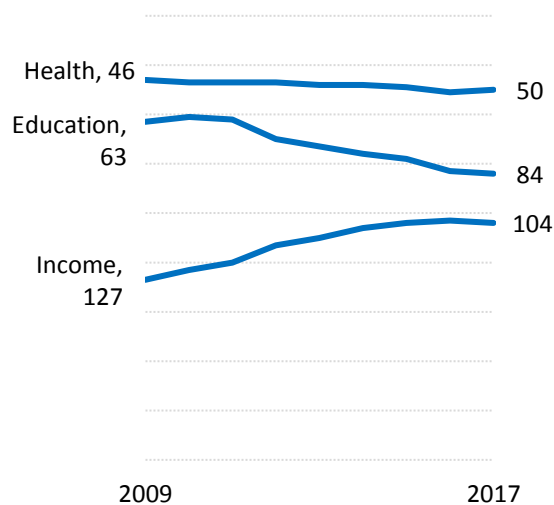


Chart 3 shows the value of the three HDI components for 2017 for St Helena, compared to the United Kingdom and South Africa. St Helena has a much higher index component for health than South Africa, because of its longer life expectancy, but it is still slightly lower than the UK. For the other two components, St Helena has lower values than both countries, but only slightly lower than South Africa. Education is lower because of relatively low enrolment rates past the age of compulsory schooling (16), and income is lower because of much lower incomes compared to the UK, and the relatively high cost of imported goods; the adjustment for lower purchasing power of a St Helena pound (on St Helena) compared to a UK pound (in the UK) has the effect of reducing average Gross National Income per capita.

Chart 3. HDI component indices for St Helena, the United Kingdom and South Africa, 2017

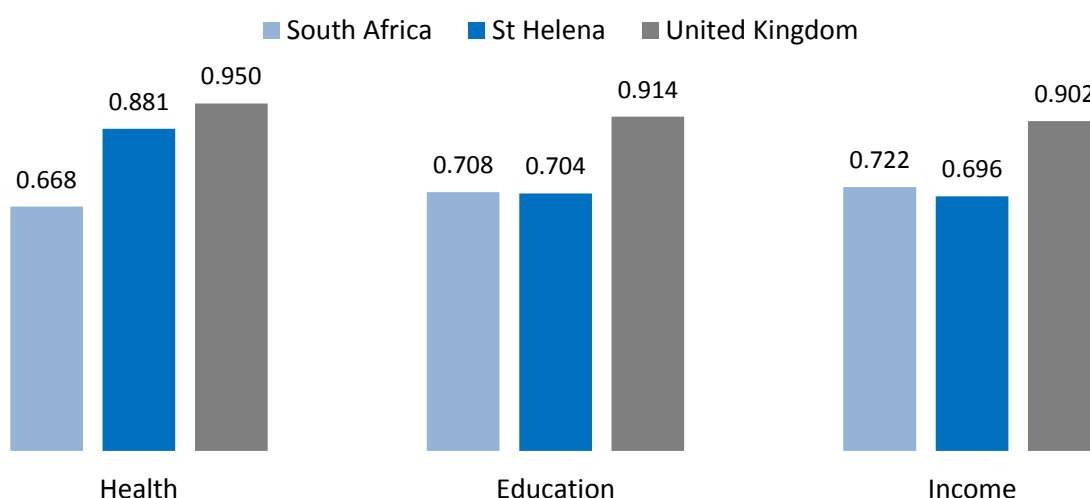
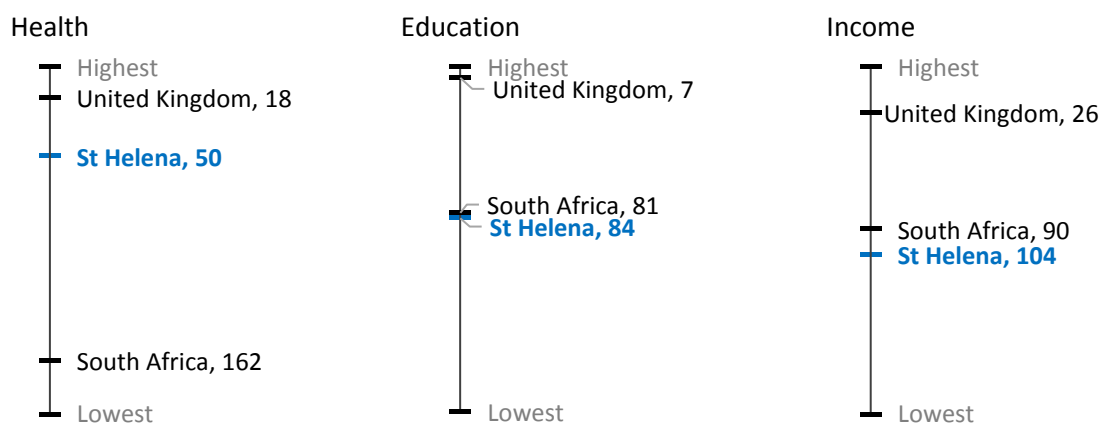


Chart 4 shows the same component indices, but using the global rankings instead of the index values themselves. St Helena’s rank is below the UK for all three components, and slightly below South Africa for both education and income (in the case of income, this is largely a result of the adjustment for local purchasing power). South Africa is well below both St Helena and the UK for health; in part, this is likely because of the higher prevalence of HIV.

Chart 4. HDI component indices for St Helena, the United Kingdom and South Africa, 2017



Notes and Methodology

About the Human Development Index

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure of achievements in three key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living. It is published by the United Nations Development Program each year in an annual Human Development Report. A key philosophy of the HDI is that it measures development in dimensions beyond the purely economic, and although it is a somewhat crude measure it is widely accepted in development discourse. Read more about the HDI, and the research and theory behind the index, here: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi>.

Measurement methodology

The health dimension is assessed by life expectancy at birth, the education dimension is measured by mean of years of schooling for adults aged 25 years and more and expected years of schooling for children of school entering age. The standard of living dimension is measured by gross national income per capita (HDI uses the logarithm of income, to reflect the diminishing importance of income with increasing GNI.) The HDI is the geometric mean of normalized indices for each of the three dimensions. The full technical methodology to compile the HDI is described in a document published by the United Nations here: http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2018_technical_notes.pdf.

Data sources

The values used to calculate the value of St Helena's HDI are given in Table 3, based on estimates calculated by St Helena's statistical office.

Table 3. Variable estimates used to calculate St Helena's HDI

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
HEALTH									
Life expectancy at birth	76.1	76.2	76.4	76.5	76.7	76.8	77.0	77.1	77.3
EDUCATION									
Mean years of schooling (ages 25 years and older)	10.5	10.5	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.6	10.7	10.7	10.7
Expected mean years of schooling	12.6	12.9	13.2	12.8	12.6	12.7	12.6	12.5	12.5
INCOME									
GNI per capita, \$ purchasing power parity	\$5,410	\$6,010	\$6,570	\$7,270	\$8,060	\$8,820	\$9,470	\$9,750	\$10,020
<i>Based on GNI per capita, £</i>	<i>£4,760</i>	<i>£5,230</i>	<i>£5,750</i>	<i>£6,320</i>	<i>£6,950</i>	<i>£7,640</i>	<i>£8,190</i>	<i>£8,480</i>	<i>£8,860</i>

Life expectancy at birth uses published estimates based on census data and statistics on deaths, smoothed using moving averages where appropriate.

GNI per capita estimates use published statistics, but data for GNI per capita for 2010-2013 are missing and have been interpolated using simple growth rates. Adjustments for purchasing power parity (PPP) have been made using a combination of the UK pound to US dollar PPP exchange rate published by the World Bank, and the St Helena pound to UK pound PPP exchange rate published in 2016 by the St Helena Statistics office.

Mean years of schooling estimates use data collected from the census for those aged 25 and older in 2016, adjusting the cohort for each year 2009-2017 (so for example the 2017 estimate uses those aged 24 and older in 2016).

Expected years of schooling is calculated as the sum of age-specific school enrolment rates in each year group. Nursery enrolment is assumed close to 100%, and enrolment in Year 1 to Year 11 (the compulsory years of schooling on St Helena) is assumed to be 100%. Years 12 and 13, and three years of tertiary, are based on enrolments in full-time education only.

Questions or comments?

Please get in touch: we are Neil Fantom, Statistical Commissioner, Justine Joshua and Stuart Moors, Senior Statistical Assistants, and Bertina Benjamin, Statistics Assistant. You can find us in person at the Statistics Office on the **first floor of the Castle**, Jamestown, at the back of the main courtyard. You can also contact us by telephone: our direct line is **22138** or via the Castle switchboard on 22470. If calling from overseas, the international dialling code for St Helena is +290. Our general office e-mail address is **statistics@sainthelena.gov.sh**, or you can email team members directly (the format is `firstname.lastname@sainthelena.gov.sh`).