

Update of the 2010 Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM)

Steering Group Terms of Reference

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Measures that describe the spatial distribution of deprivation or disadvantage have been developed and used by government and others in Northern Ireland since the 1970s. They have played a pivotal role in both informing the targeting of resources to the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland and monitoring the spatial impact of policy interventions.
- 1.2. The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) has been commissioned by the cross-departmental Statistics Coordinating Group (SCG) to undertake an update of the current Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures, which were last published in 2010 and which remain the official measures until the update has been completed.
- 1.3. There are a number of reasons for advancing the update at this time. Firstly, the current measures were largely based on information relating to 2008 and a variety of new or updated information sources will now be available, not least the new population data from the 2011 Census. Secondly, the updated information will be pivotal to the 11 new Local Government Districts in the discharge of the new responsibilities that will transfer to them in respect of Neighbourhood Renewal and Community Planning. Finally the other territories of the UK have either initiated an update of their MDM measures (i.e. Scotland) or conducted their update and published their results (i.e. both England and Wales). As such, an update of NIMDM 2010 will help ensure that Northern Ireland can continue to be considered on a more comparable footing with the other territories of the United Kingdom.

2. STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE NIMDM UPDATE

- 2.1. The update of the NIMDM is expected to yield information that will continue to play a pivotal role in terms of securing significant international funding for Northern Ireland. In addition, it will be actively used in the years ahead by NI Departments and others to inform the allocation of significant funding to those areas considered in greatest need and to monitor the effectiveness of spatial policy interventions.
- 2.2. Against this background, it was considered imperative to ensure that the work associated with the update was overseen by an authoritative Steering Group with the necessary breadth and depth of experience to provide the rigorous oversight that the project merited (see [Steering Group Membership](#)).

- 2.3. The steering group will be assisted in its important role by seven domain expert groups covering Income/Employment, Proximity to Services, Health, Education, Living Environment, Crime/Disorder and Urban/Rural interests. This approach, coupled with the wide-ranging consultation events that are planned, will help safeguard the independence of the work, ensure that the interests of all key stakeholders are considered and foster a sense of collective ownership for the new measures.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 3.1. The role of the NIMDM Steering Group will be to oversee and advise on:
- the update of the 2010 measures of spatial deprivation in Northern Ireland;
 - the publication of responses to the 2010 recommendations report;
 - the quality assurance of the update of the measures;
 - the dissemination of the results from the updated research; and
 - how best to engage with local councils.
- 3.2. In keeping with the remit given by the NICS inter-Departmental Statistics Co-ordinating Group, the update is limited to the temporal updating of the indicators and domains used in the NIMDM 2010 research and the inclusion of any amendments as a result of implementing the recommendations from the 2010 work. Statistical indicators may be revised/ included if (a) previously used indicators are no longer available and/ or (b) administrative/statistical data has been significantly enhanced. While the consideration of specific rural concerns that have emerged since the 2010 update is within scope, any significant revisions to the methodology or any contentious revisions will not be considered as part of this update.
- 3.3. The NIMDM Steering Group will also advise the NISRA Chief Executive and the inter-Departmental Statistics Co-ordinating Group on:
- implications of measuring spatial deprivation for the new administrative geographies of Local Government;
 - policy uses of the measures of spatial deprivation;
 - issues surrounding the current spatial deprivation measurement methodology; and
 - appropriate recommendations for future work in this area.
- 3.4. In the event that the Steering Group is unable to reach a consensus on a particular matter relating to the update, the matter will be escalated to the NICS Statistics Co-ordinating Group (who commissioned NISRA to undertake the update) for a decision.