

Northern Ireland Construction Survey User Comments

1. How have you used the statistical outputs from the NI Construction Bulletin (please include any decisions that they have informed)?

- For analysis of the current state of the sector and comparisons with UK
- answer user queries
- We use these statistics to determine potential training needs in the construction industry etc, some of the statistics would be incorporated into our Sector Skills Agreement which determines our strategic products for improving skills and training in the industry
- Provides clarity on what is actually happening across construction sector. useful for policy analysis and confirmation on what is happening on the ground in terms of public expenditure
- For information on the NI economy
- Used for economic commentary and Ministerial briefing
- To compare trends of construction outputs and tender costs against the BERR output indices
- to inform our member companies in Northern Ireland and the wider UK
- Purely for personal information.
- The only reason we use your data is to include the information in the Construction Statistics Annual
- I primarily use - 'value of construction output' at current prices, CEF uses these figures to inform Ministers and other decision makers/influencers of the current state of the construction industry
- Sectoral breakdown of output -Used to monitor trends with regard to sector of work and funder of work. Eg. If we know that last year half of all construction output was funded by the public purse we can make some reasonable estimates as to how a 40% cut in that funding will impact on construction output.

2. The types of decisions, if any, these statistics inform.

- Plant & people investment
- None at this stage, in future they may inform HR and/ or personal employment decisions.

3. Does the NI Construction Bulletin present information in a logical and understandable way? If "No", please state reasons for this response.

- Broadly yes.
- Yes

- It would be useful if IoC followed the format of the Index of services and Index of production in including percentage changes quarterly, year on year and rolling annual average. Also comparisons with GB / UK would be extremely useful as everything I do has to be benchmarked to UK

4. Do the construction output statistics published in the Northern Ireland Construction Bulletin satisfy your information needs?

- Yes
- For my purposes I require the seasonally adjusted series back to the year 2001, which is not contained in the publication, but which you forward to me on a quarterly basis.

5. What is your our experience of the statistical services, data quality, and the format and timing of reports associated with construction output statistics?

- I don't use the 'value of construction output' at fixed prices. The deflator that is used is generated by using data from GB. This has artificially skewed the figures in the past. It is an important point because policy makers who do not know the background to the stats will rely on this information. From 2000 to 2007 when all other indicators pointed toward significant construction growth in real terms the Bulletin (at fixed prices) showed a different picture. It was evident that the deflator being applied was not reflective of the local situation.
- Services fine, data dependent on response so cannot criticise that, timing (frequency) is appropriate. I'd have views on format and focus but still relevant, not something I could feedback concisely!
- Good
- For constructing my own figures it would be helpful to have the construction index published at the same time as the other main input indices ie the IOS and IOP - this would mean publication one week earlier than at present. I note that revisions to earlier quarters data are sometimes quite substantial.

6. Do you have any comments on the timing of the publication of the NI Construction Bulletin? If so, please record below:

- OK now that occurs the same time as IoP and IoS
- the sooner the publication can be published the better
- Improved, as now in time with DETI outputs
- Helpful that it is published on same date as DETI IoP and IoS

7. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on how the NI Construction Bulletin could be improved?

- Useful - particular the two pages covering overall activity in each key sector
- If possible, provide some indication of the relative accuracy of the value figures, main index and sub-indices, eg confidence intervals or standard errors.
- no other comments expect that it would be useful if a NIW COPI figure could be presented formally like that of BERR.