

NORTHERN IRELAND CONSTRUCTION BULLETIN USER GROUP – 12 APRIL 2011

Attendees

Dr Kevin Sweeney (Central Survey Unit, NISRA)
Andrew McCormick (Central Survey Unit, NISRA)
Brendan Morgan (Central Survey Unit, NISRA)
Nicola Shiels (Central Survey Unit, NISRA)
Philip McDonagh (Chair Statistics Advisory Committee)
Ciaran Fox (Construction Employers Federation)
Donal McRandal (Construction and Advisory Division, DFP)
Roy Mitchell (Construction and Advisory Division, DFP)
Sinead Leydon (Central Statistics Office, RoI)
Tony Dignan (Consultant)

Apologies were received from Richard Ramsey (Economist, Ulster Bank).

Introduction

Dr Sweeney opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Northern Ireland Construction Bulletin User Group.

Dr Sweeney explained that the purpose of setting up the User Group was to ensure that the production, management and dissemination of construction statistics contained in the Northern Ireland Construction Bulletin should meet the requirements of informed decision-making by government, public services, business, researchers and the public.

Users were advised that a record of the meeting and any actions arising would be placed on the Central Survey Unit website.

Survey Background

As this was the first meeting of the User Group, users were given a presentation on the background to the Quarterly Construction Enquiry and the dissemination of results contained in the NI Construction Bulletin. This included:

- Rationale for the survey;
- Main outputs;
- Sampling;
- Methodology;
- Definitions;
- Data Collection;
- Data Validation;
- Analysis and Reporting;

Throughout the presentation, users were given the opportunity to ask any clarifying questions.

Open Discussion

Following the presentation, a more general discussion took place around the background to the survey and users needs.

Users confirmed that information contained in the NI Construction Bulletin met their information needs and that they were content with the presentation of the results. Users also confirmed that the recent results published from the survey were in line with the expectations of the NI Construction Industry.

In general discussion, users raised a number of points and CSU agreed to consider the following:

1. Sample coverage – review the sample coverage of the survey and highlight to users any construction output that may not be picked up through the survey;
2. Consider whether it is feasible to produce a private/public split for infrastructure output;
3. Consider whether it is possible to provide a sub-Northern Ireland geographical breakdown of construction output;
4. Seek clarification from ONS as to the rationale for excluding payments made to consultants or architects from other firms;
5. Include a paragraph in the Background Notes of the Northern Ireland Construction Bulletin advising users that UK deflators are applied to the NI construction data and that regional deflators are not available;

Conclusion

Those attending were asked about the usefulness, format and frequency of future user group meetings. The user group meeting as a forum for discussion was welcomed. It was agreed that the user group would meet once a year. In the interim, users agreed that CSU could approach them about any new developments.

Dr Sweeney thanked users for attending and closed the meeting.